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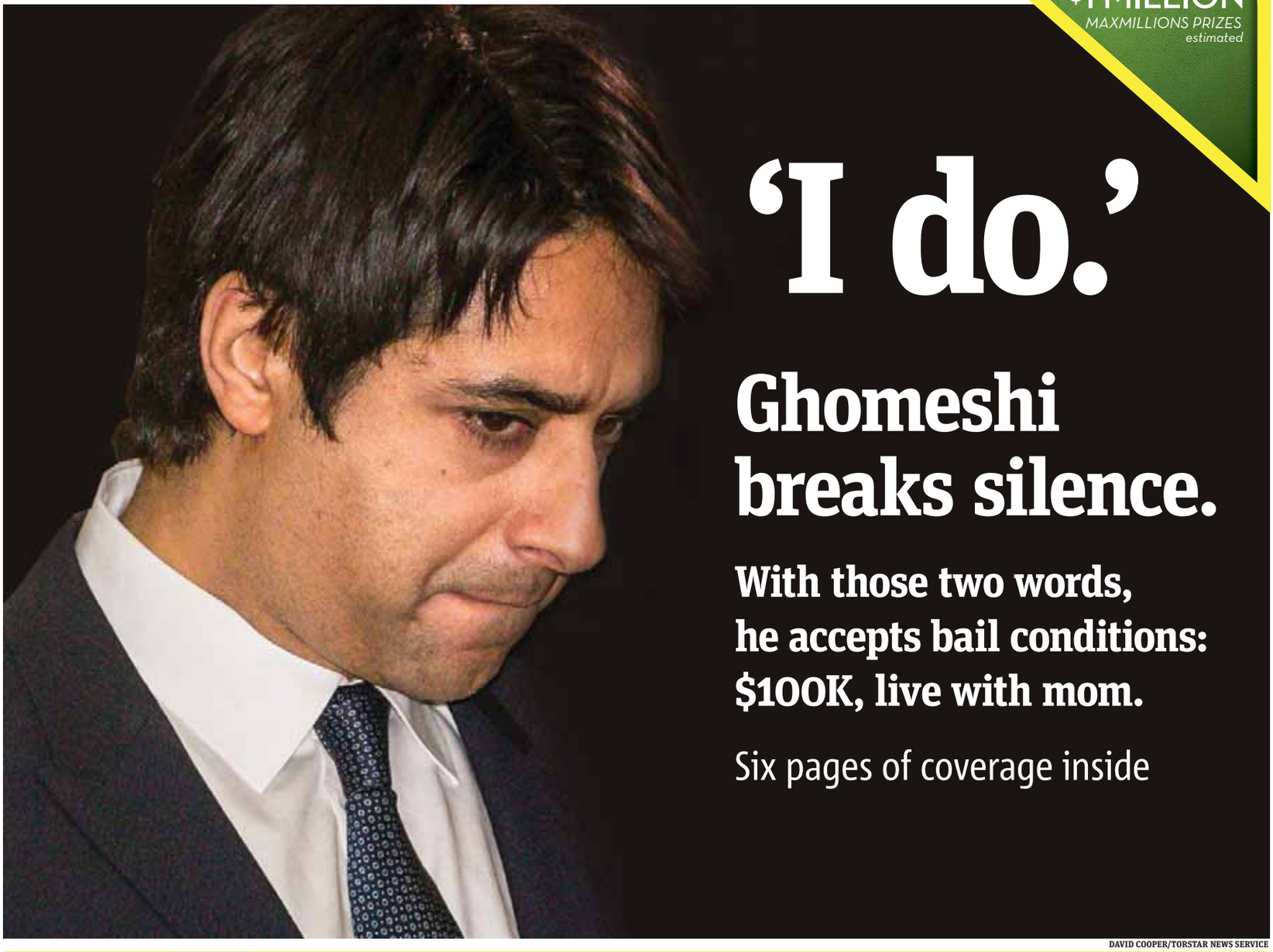

DAVID COOPER/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

'I do.'

Ghomeshi breaks silence.

With those two words, he accepts bail conditions: $100K, live with mom.

Six pages of coverage inside

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Ghomeshi out on $100K bail

College Park. Disgraced former CBC host is charged with sexual assault, overcoming resistance by choking

JESSICA SMITH CROSS
jessica.smithcross@metronews.ca

Jian Ghomeshi said just two words in public Wednesday, telling the court he understands the conditions of his bail.

"I do," he said in a courtroom at College Park.

He will not spend a night in jail, he will refrain from communicating with his alleged victims and he will live with his mother, who has put up a $100,000 bond.

Ghomeshi surrendered himself to police Wednesday morning and was arrested and charged with four counts of sexual assault and one count of overcoming resistance by choking, based on the allegations of three women. He was out on bail hours later.

Ghomeshi did not address the media gathered outside court. He walked in silence, keeping his head down as Toronto police acted as his bodyguards, guiding him through a crowd of reporters and dozens of onlookers outside College Park.

His lawyer, Marie Henein, said he will be pleading not guilty and he will not be speaking to the media, as cameras rolled and smartphones flashed.

"It is not my practice to litigate my cases in the media. This one will be no different. We will say whatever we have to say in a court of law," Henein said.

Ghomeshi heard the details of the charges against him in court. He looked tired but polished and wore a black suit and white shirt.

The Crown's evidence given at the bail hearing is subject to a publication ban until it is revealed at trial.

Two of the three alleged victims have asked that their identities continue to be withheld. Actress Lucy DeCoutere did not make the same request after already having gone public with her story.

She issued a statement after news of Ghomeshi's arrest broke:

"The past month has seen a major shift in the conversation about violence against women. It has been an overwhelming and painful time for many people, including myself, but also very inspiring. I hope that victims' voices continue to be heard and that this is the start of a change that is so desperately needed," she said.

The Toronto Police Service began an investigation into the allegations shortly after they first appeared in the media in October.

Insp. Joanna Beaven-Desjardins, head of the sex-crimes unit, said police approached news outlets they believed knew the identities of women who were making allegations against Ghomeshi and asked those media outlets to pass on police contacts to those women.

Beaven-Desjardins had urged the women to come forward, providing them the option to speak with police, whether or not they were prepared to make a formal complaint.

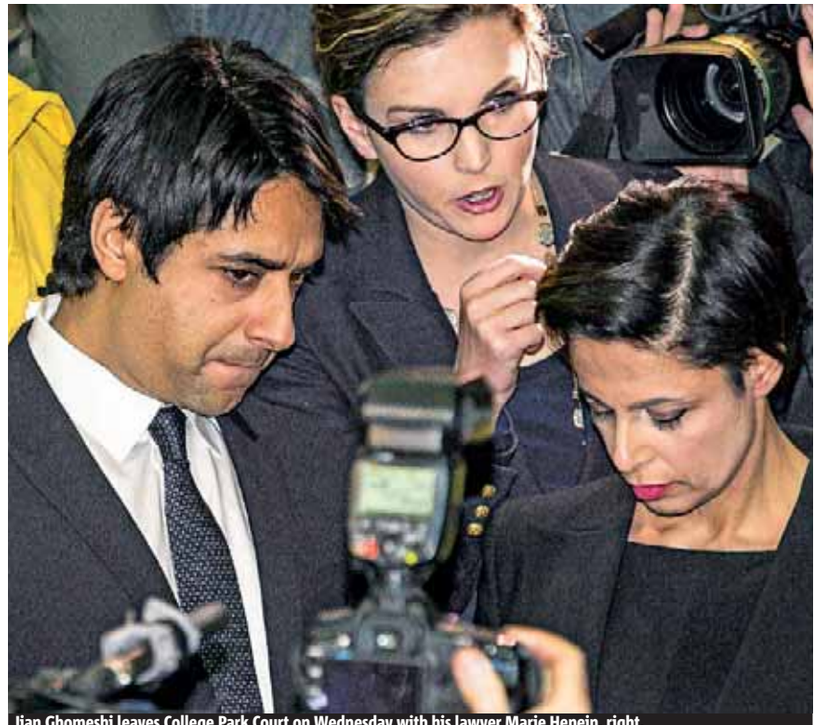
DeCoutere said the process made her feel "heard and validated."

"The police I dealt with were warm and sympathetic," DeCoutere said at the time.

Police continue to ask any victims to come forward.

Choking charge

- Overcoming resistance by choking is defined in the Criminal Code as "attempts, by any means, to choke, suffocate or strangle another person, or by any means calculated to choke, suffocate or strangle, attempts to render another person insensible, unconscious or incapable of resistance," committed "with intent to enable or assist himself or another person to commit an indictable offence."
- It carries a possible punishment of life imprisonment.



Jian Ghomeshi leaves College Park Court on Wednesday with his lawyer Marie Henein, right.
DAVID COOPER/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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CAN-142014_1411_TORMET

How Ghomeshi 'rough sex' scandal sparked a global rape dialogue

Strength in numbers. Public allegations against Jian Ghomeshi encourage sexual assault victims to come forward

The blog post was called Rip It Open, and writing it was painful for author Mandy Stobo.

For the first time, the Calgary artist publicly detailed a lifetime of sexual abuse. She alleges she was raped by a family member from ages 3-9, raped again as a teenager while in the psychiatric ward of a local hospital, and was forced to work in a brothel for a week while backpacking Cambodia at age 20.

Privately, she struggled with shame. But when sex allegations involving Jian Ghomeshi surfaced, Stobo, 31, added her voice to an ever-growing chorus decrying violence against women.

"I thought even if it helps one person say out loud something that's happened to them and it lets them breathe for a minute, it's worth it," said Stobo, who has received hundreds of emails from fellow victims across Canada since publishing her post.

Ghomeshi was charged with four counts of sexual assault Wednesday. Experts say the story has pushed rape culture into a global spotlight and allowed victims to find strength in numbers.

Janice Du Mont, a scientist at Toronto's Women's College Research Institute, said the Ghomeshi scandal has had a "ripple effect." A week and a half after media reported allegations against the radio star, two NDP MPs alleged they'd been harassed on Parliament Hill; Justin Trudeau immediately suspended the two accused Liberal MPs. In recent weeks, several of Bill Cosby's alleged rape victims have also come forward.

"The most important thing really arising out of this is it's making the invisible visible, in terms of the sheer scope ... of the problem of sexual violence," said Du Mont.

Hashtag movements like #beenrapednevereported, which also surfaced in the wake of the Ghomeshi allegations, are empowering victims world-wide, she added.

Scores of women have used the hashtag online to recount their own tales of being sexually assaulted.

In light of the scandal, Lukasik-Foss said the public seems to be more aware of the barriers to criminally reporting sex assaults, such as the re-traumatization victims often face in the justice system. The emphasis should be on making victims feel supported and believed whether or not they press charges, she said, adding only 4 -5 per cent of assault allegations are false.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Jian Ghomeshi arrives at College Park Court on Wednesday in a police cruiser. SCREENGRAB COURTESY CITYNEWS

StatsCan says:

Only about 1 per cent of the 460,000 sex assaults that take place in Canada each year result in charges.

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Ghomeshi's charges, potential sentences

Charges explained.
Ex-CBC host could face up to 10 years for each sexual assault charge, while 'overcoming resistance' charge can carry a life sentence

On Wednesday, disgraced former CBC host Jian Ghomeshi was arrested and charged with four counts of sexual assault and one count of "overcome resistance — choking."

The charge of overcoming resistance comes with a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. Each sexual assault charge could lead to a maximum jail sentence of 10 years.

Section 246 of the Criminal Code defines overcoming resistance by choking as "attempts, by any means, to choke, suffocate or strangle another person, or by any means calculated to choke, suffocate or strangle, attempts to render another person insensible, unconscious or incapable of resistance."

"It's a very serious offence," criminal defence lawyer Daniel Rechtshaffen says of the overcoming resistance charge. "Basically it means that you're choking someone with the intention of stopping them from resisting (the commission of a criminal act)."

Rechtshaffen speculates that the charge's harsh maximum sentence is because the threat to one's bodily integrity increases exponentially when a person is incapacitated.

"Generally speaking, when one of these charges is laid, it's usually in conjunction with some other indictable offence like a sex assault," the lawyer adds. "Although it sounds like an obscure offence, it actually gets laid with relative frequency."

"Choking is one of the most serious offences in the criminal code as evidenced by the fact that it carries a potential sentence of life in prison," criminal defence attorney Alvin Shidlowski adds. While life sentences are very seldom meted out for this charge, Shidlowski says jail terms are frequently levied.

"If someone is convicted of the offence, the sentence generally runs consecutive to any other sentences for which the person is convicted," he says. "It's a very, very serious charge."

Criminal defence lawyer Angela Chaisson says that with no known criminal record, and given the nature of the allegations levelled against Ghomeshi in the media, Chaisson believes it is unlikely Ghomeshi would receive maximum sentences for the charges if convicted.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

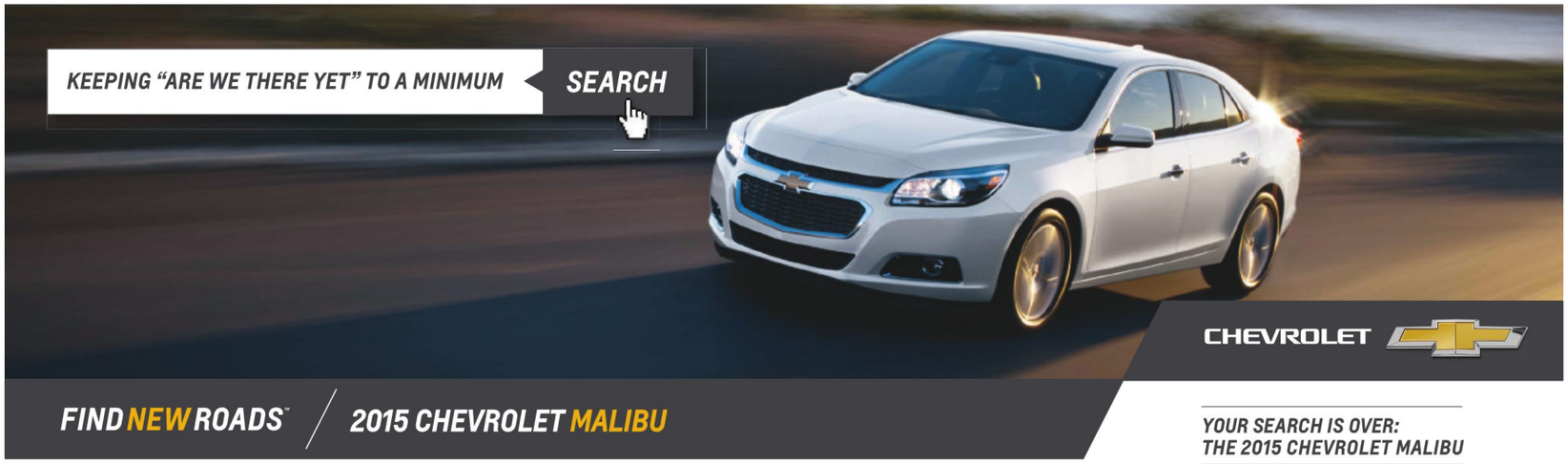
Jian Ghomeshi in the College Park courtroom on Wednesday to face charges.
ALEXANDRA NEWBOULD/FOR METRO

Jian Ghomeshi

Four things to note about Ghomeshi's criminal case.

- **Longer than usual.** The month it took police to investigate allegations against Jian Ghomeshi is longer than normal for a sexual assault case, said Toronto defence lawyer Daniel Brown. He believes the delay in pressing charges likely means police have been thorough and no other charges should be expected.
- **Taken into custody.** It's somewhat odd, Brown said, that police took Ghomeshi into custody and hauled him into a court hearing, given that he has no criminal history. Normally in these circumstances a person would be allowed to go free and report to a future court date. He added this speaks to the seriousness of the charges.
- **Initial hearings.** It likely will be eight to 10 months until evidence is presented in the case. Before that, there will be a series of hearings, which could be handled with or without Ghomeshi present.
- **His day in court.** If there is a trial, it's very possible that it could be two or more years away before the case is potentially brought before a judge and jury.

A lot of the discussion leading up to any trial is likely to be about whether all of the charges will be decided as one or if they will be separated into various cases. That decision will be made by a judge, Brown said, but it likely would be in Ghomeshi's best interest to face them separately: "The benefit of not having them together is each case is decided on its own merit," Brown said. ANGELA MULLINS/METRO



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Time may hamper Ghomeshi case

'Memories fade'. With the charges relating to incidents in 2002 and 2003, physical records and witness testimony could work against prosecution, experts say

The prosecution in the Jian Ghomeshi case will be fighting against the effects of time. With more than 10 years between the alleged incidents and charges being laid, many records will be difficult to retrieve and witnesses memories eroded, legal experts say.

The charges Ghomeshi will face in court — four counts of sexual assault and one count of overcome resistance, choking — stem from incidents alleged to have occurred in 2002 and 2003.

"At this point, any physical evidence that may have existed would surely have disappeared," said Angela Chaisson, a criminal lawyer with Ruby Shiller Chan Hasan Barristers. "And of course, we all know that memories fade with time."

The legal proceedings against Ghomeshi are in the early stages, but experts highlight the difficulties that time will present to the prosecution's evidence.

"It's more of a challenge in a historical case to prosecute, but it's not impossible. People are found guilty every day in court on the evidence of a complainant who's believed," said criminal attorney Daniel Brown.

Records like credit card and banking statements, which are often relied on to corroborate events, would be difficult to obtain, said Chaisson. Cellphone records, including text messages, would be a non-starter unless preserved by the complainants themselves.

"Ten years, especially in 2002 when a lot of records were paper-based, is a real issue," said Chaisson.

Widespread allegations documented against Ghomeshi in media reports, could provide for a type of evidence known as similar fact evidence, where outside information is introduced to the case. It requires an application to the judge presiding over the case and in some instances the evidence may have to be tested by calling additional witnesses.

The bar to admit similar fact evidence is high, and its value must be weighed against whether or not it will prejudice the proceedings, said Brown.

"It's presumptively inadmissible at a trial unless the crown can establish that the allegations are so similar in nature that they show a pattern of conduct," said Brown.

Media has published stories that detail sexual abuse allegations of nine women, some as recently as 2013.

"Certainly if I was the Crown I would bring a similar fact application," said Chaisson. "But they're tricky, especially if there's a jury involved and especially if the past events that are being alleged are more reprehensible than the facts before the courts ... It's almost like a mini-trial within a trial, the credibility of witnesses has to be considered so they have to be called." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Jian Ghomeshi leaves College Park Court on Wednesday with his lawyers after being released on $100,000 bail. Police helped him as he fought his way through a throng of media and onlookers. COLIN MCCONNELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

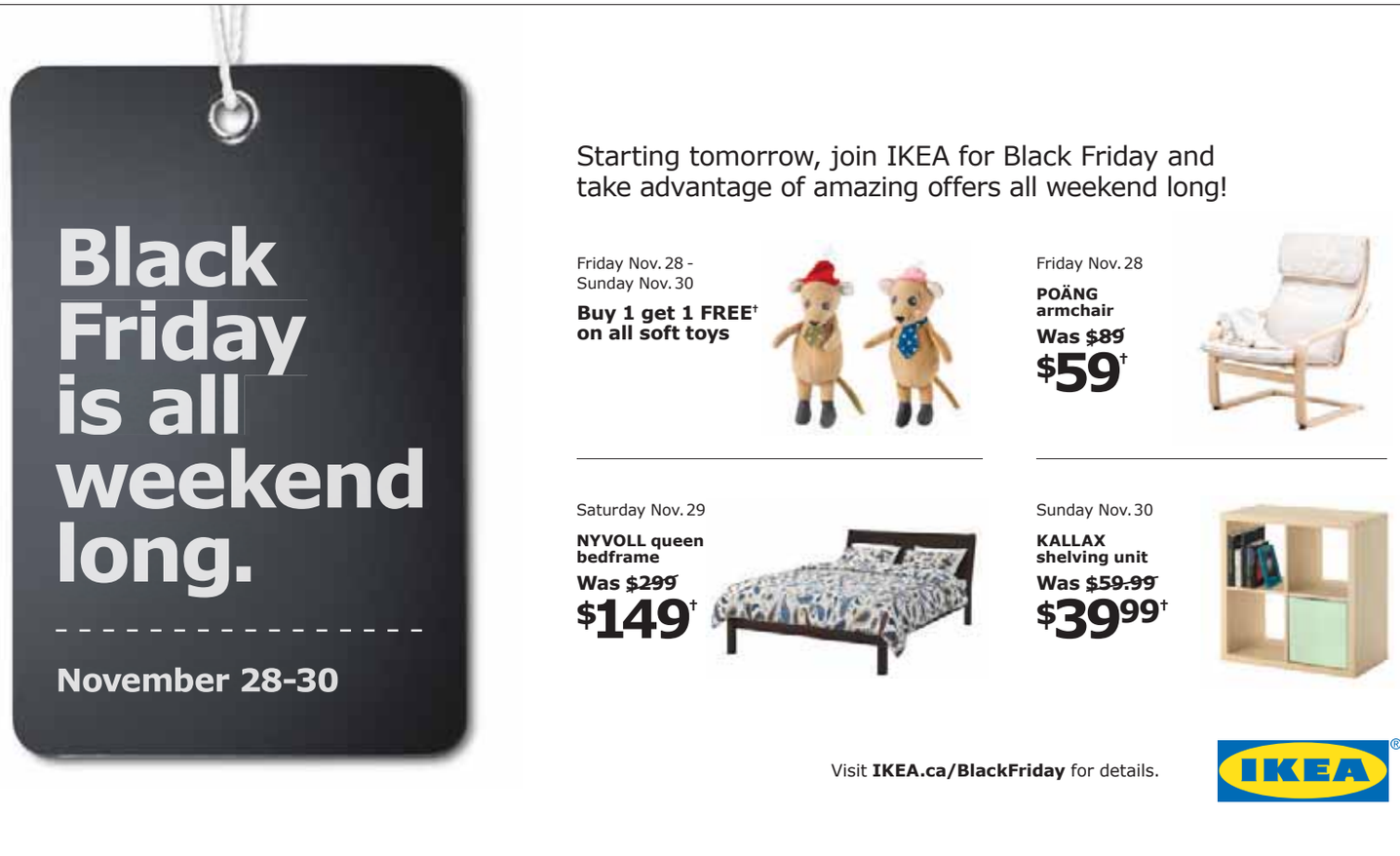
'Similar fact evidence'

Pattern of conduct?

David Butt, a criminal lawyer who worked as a prosecutor for 13 years, says similar fact evidence can bolster the testimony of complainants in cases where it is admitted by the judge and consistent with their testimony.

"Similar fact evidence can lend a perspective on an event. It says something more powerful about a person possibly if it can be demonstrated that they have done X, Y, or Z multiple times," said Butt. "Insofar as it reveals a pattern of conduct, it makes each individual person recounting an episode that fits in that pattern more credible."

Butt said that he expects the issue of similar fact evidence will be brought up during the case.



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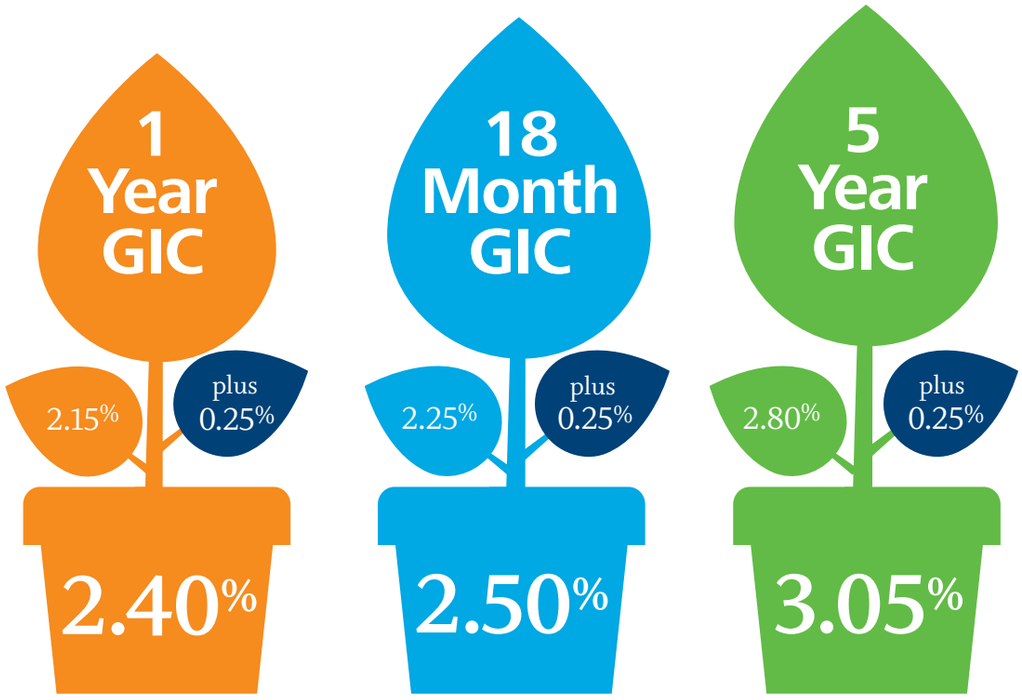

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From mayoral bid to PC leadership bid

Doug Ford. If 'lone wolf' ran and won the race to lead Ontario's PC party it would bring 'turmoil, rancor,' says expert

JESSICA SMITH CROSS
jessica.smithcross@metronews.ca

Doug Ford is expected to announce if he'll run for the leadership of the Progressive Conservative Party on Thursday morning.

He told Torstar News Service earlier in the week the stars are aligning for his leadership bid and he says he's crunched the numbers and believes the votes he won in the Toronto mayoral election indicate he'd benefit the PC's, who tend to do poorly in the city.

"I got 331,000 (votes) and the vast majority of them — 80 per cent of them — would never vote PC, never have voted PC, but they'd vote if I ran," Ford told Torstar.

Professor of political science at Ryerson University Myer Siemiatycki says it's just not that simple. Even though Ford got 100,000 more votes than the PCs in Toronto this year, there's no guarantee those voters will stick with him into provincial politics.

"At the municipal level we don't have political parties. The brand that counts is name recognition and name association," he said. "Once you get to the provincial and federal level, the party association matters a lot more.

"In the last provincial election in Toronto, the Progressive Conservatives didn't win a single seat," he said. "It isn't a strong brand in Toronto."

There's also no guarantee the rest of the province would support Ford, and voters everywhere may decide to vote anyone-but-Ford, said Siemiatycki.

According to Metro's analysis, the PCs racked up just over 208,000 votes in the 22 Toronto's provincial ridings in Toronto in the last election, about 23 per cent of the 896,463 valid votes in the city. The party did significantly better in Southern Ontario outside of Toronto and won 31 per cent of the vote provincewide.

Doug Ford won 33 per cent of the of the 978,331 votes cast in the Toronto mayoral election.

Poll-by-poll results show that Ford's support, and the PC's support this year was geographically different.

Siemiatycki said Doug Ford's municipal experience should be a cautionary tale for PC voters: municipal politics is an individual sport, but provincial politics is a team sport, and Ford doesn't play well with others.

He predicted that a Ford, as PC leader, would lead Ontario into an era of "double layered rancor and polarization," within the PC party and without.

Often on Toronto council, Doug and Rob Ford were the lone dissenting votes together and they had a tendency to antagonize others, said Siemiatycki. In provincial politics, the leader must work with his or her own MPPs, riding associations and MPPs from other parties.

"He's much more of a lone wolf, or some might say loose cannon," he said.

Quoted

"He's much more of a lone wolf, or some might say loose cannon."
Ryerson University's Myer Siemiatycki

While a premier would be hard-pressed to return every call from every Ontarian, the Ford political approach could work, in some ways, on the provincial level, he said.

"The core of Doug and Rob's political approach or philosophy was straightforward, smaller government is good, focus on the symbolism of appearing to be responsive to taxpayers and the public. That approach could be pitched and marketed in the provincial arena," he said.

That would "echo" the politics of former premier Mike Harris, he said.

"If Doug Ford was selected leader of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party, what I think they can look forward to is a degree of turmoil and rancor within the party from those who felt they have a leader who isn't consulting anybody and is acting unilaterally," he said. "We would certainly have a provincial-wide tenor of politics that, like in Harris days, is focused on negativity and blaming people, and promoting cuts to government services."

"This time, it would be more exacerbated by a layer of internal party discord," he added.

Doug Ford says the stars are aligning for his PC leadership bid. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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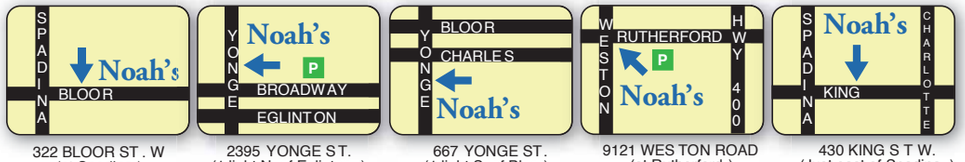

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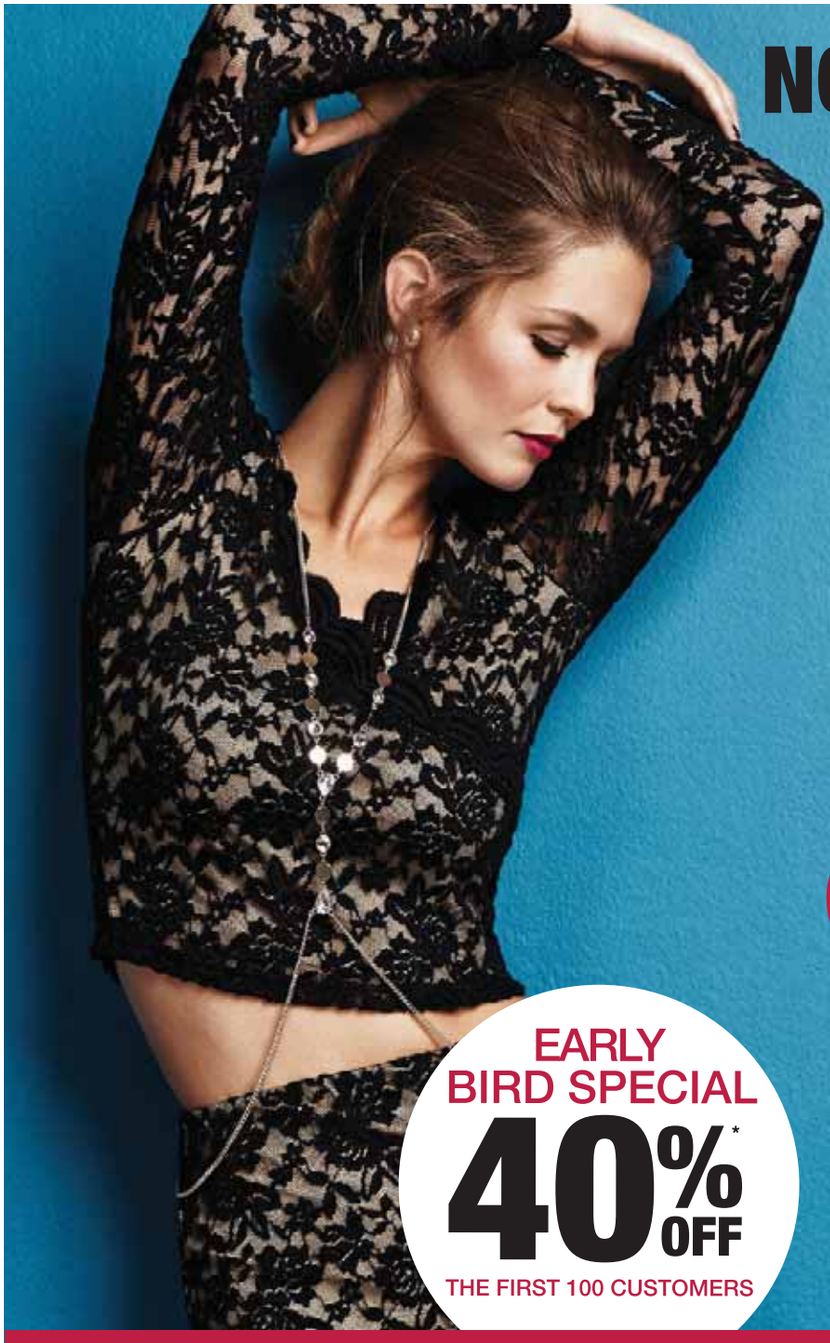

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Stop pressing the yellow bar!

Too many delays. Toronto Transit Commission rebrands 'passenger-assistance' strips as 'emergency alarms' after problems

LUKE SIMCOE
Metro Online

In a bid to reduce unnecessary delays, the Toronto Transit Commission has rebranded passenger-assistance strips on subways as "emergency alarms."

"Think of it as you would 911," TTC CEO Andy Byford said. "You use it for emergency situations and emergency situations only."

That means situations like fires, assaults or a loss of consciousness. Right now, more than 60 per cent of passenger-assistance alarms are deemed non-emergencies, the TTC said.

In one case, a woman activated the alarm to ask for directions to Union Station, the service says. It's also common for the alarm to be triggered by accident, such as by a wayward hockey stick.

So far this year, improper use of the emergency alarm has resulted in 672 delays across the TTC, totalling more than 2,800 minutes.

"While the crew are investigating … the train will be stationed at the platform, which of course means the service behind that train will be delayed," Byford said. "That's the reason why we're saying 'only use the emergency alarm in an emergency situation.'"

Consequences

"While the crew are investigating ... the train will be stationed at the platform, which of course means the service behind that train will be delayed."

TTC CEO Andy Byford

TTC CEO Andy Byford demonstrates what happens when someone pushes the emergency alarm on a subway train in this screenshot from a new public-service announcement. YOUTUBE

Only in emergencies

TTC CEO Andy Byford, who was joined by senior emergency-services officials, stressed that riders should still call for help if they have chest pains, see or are the victim of an assault or spot a clear danger such as a fire. "If a patient is experiencing chest pain or shortness of breath or you see someone who becomes unconscious, we want you to call 911," said Paul Raftis, chief of Toronto Paramedic Services. "However, for more minor medical situations — say somebody has injured their hand or twisted their ankle or they are feeling a little bit unwell — wait until the next stop, step off the train or assist that person getting off the train and ask for assistance." Toronto riders activate far more alarms than passengers in other cities, said Byford.

TORONTO NEWS SERVICE

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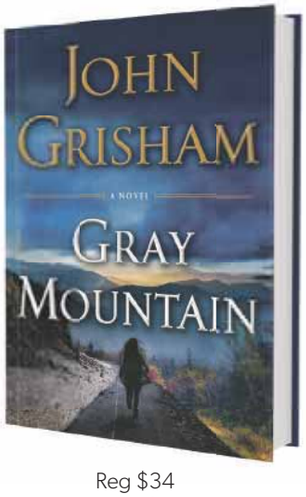

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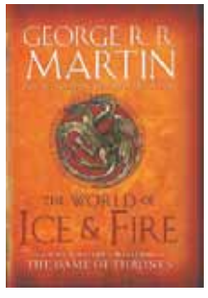

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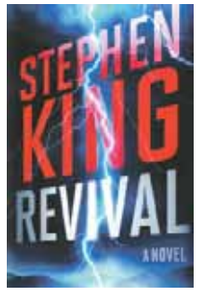

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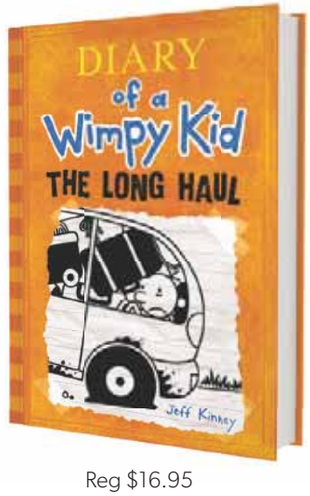

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‘Near misses’ in Toronto school violence

School violence.
TDSB data shows that guns, shots, knives and stabbings account for one in five serious incidents.

Two former classmates at a northwest Toronto high school confronted each other in a stairwell. One was stabbed in the stomach. The other one walked away.

A student in a Junction-area high school brought his handgun to class for the day, a discovery police made after arriving with a warrant for his arrest.

In Etobicoke, a fight broke out between a boy and a group of girls at the plaza across from the high school. The girls attacked adults who tried to stop the melee. When the boy’s friends arrived from a different school, they jumped on a student on the school’s sports field, stabbing him three times in the back. The phys-ed teacher chased them down, holding one until police arrived.

These are a few of the serious incidents that rocked Toronto high schools last year. Taken from a report compiled for Torstar News Service by the Toronto District School Board, the 1,100 incidents over a four-year period provide a snapshot (these are not all of the cases) of the hidden side of high school life.

The incidents are reported by school staff to the board head office.

A Torstar analysis found that one in five incidents involved knives, stabbings, guns and shots fired in and around schools.

File photo of a lock down at George S. Henry Academy. A pistol was involved in the incident.
TORONTO STAR/MICHAEL STUPARYK`

Armed incidents

A Torstar analysis of incident reports found 111 cases that mentioned knives and stabbings over the four-year period. Guns were mentioned 117 times.

Most of these incidents don’t make the news, but those included in the report support teachers’ warnings that day-to-day life in some schools, particularly in high-risk neighbourhoods, is increasingly dangerous.

Doug Jolliffe, president of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers’ Federation, said the cases confirm educators’ worries that school violence is “becoming more intense.”

The cases were compiled from the board’s Caring and Safe Schools weekly reports and crisis reports from the 2010-11 to the 2013-14 school years. The details provide the year of the incident, the “family of schools” (based on geographical location within the city) and a short narrative.

Examples included stabbings, gun possession, sexual assault accusations, use of knives, and beatings. The report also documents examples of screaming, abusive students who attack their teachers.

It’s clear that all incidents were not included because the board’s expulsions and suspensions related to weapons and drugs, which should be defined as serious, are much higher.

School policies have changed in recent years to lessen the number of students expelled and suspended, because the earlier push to kick them out just left young people unattended on the street.

As one educator said, “Teachers don’t want to get rid of students. They have a great deal of empathy for the troubles that they’ve faced in life.”

But without specific action by the board, Jolliffe said, nothing will change.

Go to metronews.ca for full story. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

Kids in the hall

“Now, in certain schools, long-time staffers will say, ‘We are losing our halls to the (control of the) students.’ ”

Doug Jolliffe, president of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers’ Federation

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TTC. Presto will launch on new streetcars Sunday

TTC riders will be able to use Presto electronic fare cards on new streetcars starting Sunday.

"Customer ambassadors will be available to assist customers with Presto cards as they adapt to the new system," Metrolinx spokeswoman Anne Marie Aikins said Wednesday.

There are only two new cars in service on Spadina so far. A third new streetcar is being tested.

"If all goes well, it will be working next week with Presto on board," said the TTC's Brad Ross.

The provincial fare card system was supposed to be available Nov. 3. Neither Metrolinx nor the TTC have explained the delay.

It remains unclear when the Presto system will roll out on other TTC surface vehicles.

Aikins said it will be gradual.

"We're working on the schedule with TTC."

Presto won't necessarily make TTC trips paperless, either.

As they do on the subway, Presto riders will need to take a paper transfer to connect with another TTC vehicle.

Streetcar riders will be able to tap their Presto card on one of six on-board readers to pay their fare.

If they want a transfer, they have to go to one of the two machines on the car and tap their card twice — once to pay, once to receive a transfer as proof of payment.

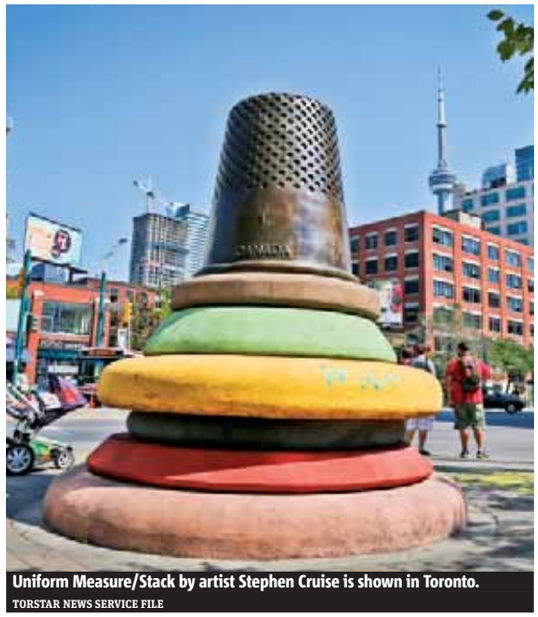
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Details

The card readers are already available at 14 subway stations.

- A further 11 downtown stations will be added as part of the first phase of the TTC launch.
- It's not known when that will be.

Unauthorized addition to public art scrubbed



Uniform Measure/Stack by artist Stephen Cruise is shown in Toronto.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

Artist's complaint. Paint removed from Richmond and Spadina tape measure

LUKE SIMCOE
luke.simcoe@metronews.ca

The City of Toronto has decided that a beloved piece of street art at Richmond and Spadina no longer measures up.

A graffiti-removal crew hired by the city has all but done away with a 25-metre tape measure that stretched along the sidewalk adjacent to the main installation.

Quoted

"The artist requested it be removed, so it was removed."

Shane Gerard, City of Toronto spokesman

While many believed the tape measure was part of the main piece — a thimble and button sculpture known as Uniform Measure/Stack by Stephen Cruise — it was actually an unauthorized addition by street artist Victor Fraser.

Cruise's original work does feature the outline of a ruler, but Fraser painted it bright colours in 2006 and has maintained the paint job ever since.

According to city spokesman Shane Gerard, the city was aware of Fraser's intervention but only erased it earlier this month after Cruise complained.

Tito Aguirre, a barber at Aristotelis' Hair Styling nearby on Richmond, isn't thrilled about the change.

"Personally, I liked it yellow," he said. "People would always take pictures of it or lay down on it to measure themselves, but now I can't see the numbers whatsoever."

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Grey Cup lands in Vancouver harbour

CFL Commissioner Mark Cohon gets a Navy escort as he carries the Grey Cup into Coal Harbour in Vancouver on Wednesday. The annual festival kicks off Thursday and runs through Sunday when the 102nd Grey Cup will be held at BC Place between the Calgary Stampeders and Hamilton Tiger-Cats.

JENNIFER GAUTHIER/FOR METRO IN VANCOUVER

CBC to air episode on Jian Ghomeshi

'The Unmaking of Jian Ghomeshi.'
Upcoming Fifth Estate episode to explore 'what really happened'

CBC is promising to tell the story of "what really happened" with Jian Ghomeshi in an upcoming episode of The Fifth Estate.

The investigative program is set to run an hour-long documentary on the disgraced Q radio host Friday, titled The Unmaking of Jian Ghomeshi.

"There will be numerous revelations that will cast a new light on what happened," said Jim Williamson, executive producer of The Fifth Estate.

Williamson said several employees speak up in the episode for the first time about what they experienced. The Fifth Estate pursued the story with support from CBC News senior management, and it will focus on what happened inside the CBC, not the criminal investigation, he said.

Quoted

"This is a vital story to tell since it touches so many people in so many different ways."

Jim Williamson, executive producer of The Fifth Estate

"In one sense it's a traditional Fifth Estate investigation, the kind we do when there is an important story of wide relevance. But it's untraditional because it is painfully close to home; it's about our own network, and touches on some of our colleagues," he said.

But everyone The Fifth Estate approached felt it was critical for the program to "delve deep," no matter how difficult that might be, Williamson said.

"And so people opened up to us and told their stories," he said, adding viewers will now have a "much fuller picture."

In a preview, Ghomeshi is described as "the breakout success the CBC needed," but says that even as he became ubiquitous on TV, radio and at awards galas, there were "whispers and allegations."

The 47-year-old former CBC star was released on $100,000 bail Wednesday after he was arrested on sexual assault charges. His lawyer Marie Henein said he will plead not guilty and will not make any statements to the media.

Ghomeshi was fired by CBC on Oct. 26 after the public broadcaster said it had seen "graphic evidence" that he had physically injured a woman.

Since his dismissal, nine women have come forward with allegations that Ghomeshi sexually or physically assaulted them. Three have filed police complaints. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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High Arctic no refuge for polar bears if climate change continues

New study. If global temperatures increase and arctic ice melts, polar bears could face dire starvation

A new study, published Wednesday in an online science journal, says climate change is on track to push polar bears into dire straits throughout the High Arctic region by the end of the century.

Even co-author Andy Derocher, a polar bear expert at the University of Alberta who is no stranger to gloomy news, was taken aback by the results.

"I had hung my hopes on the idea that polar bears would persist out to the end of this century, allowing us to go into some sort of conservation mode," he said.

"But now, looking at this work and this modelling, it does not look very good. I'm not as optimistic as I used to be."

The paper, published in PLOS ONE, uses the latest data to project what would happen to sea ice in the islands northwest of the Gulf of Boothia if global temperatures increased by 3.5 degrees Celsius. Derocher acknowledges that's a "severe" amount of warming, but it's a level the planet is on track for if significant measures to curb greenhouse gas emissions aren't enacted.

Such warming would lead to more and more years in which waters used by specific polar bear populations would be ice free for more than 180 days, the study says. That would mean more and more years in which the bears couldn't use the hunting platform they need to get their fat-rich seals for at least six months.

The study adds urgency to efforts to fight climate change, said Paul Crowley of the World Wildlife Fund, which advocates the High Arctic be managed to give the bears the best chance at survival.

"If we do have reduction of emissions by 2050, then we're looking at sea ice that could regrow and habitat that could bounce back," he said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canadian polar bears could be facing extinction sooner than experts realized. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Analysis

The effect of 180 ice-free days

At 180 ice-free days, starvation would likely be able to kill off between nine and 21 per cent of adult male bears, with females and cubs more vulnerable.

At the same time, the ice would be breaking up earlier and forming later, which would affect how successful females were in raising their cubs. Early breakup can cause reproductive failure in anywhere from half to all of pregnant sows. Caught between increasingly frequent years of poor sea ice and increasingly poor birth rates, the bears would eventually be squeezed out.

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Teens who've had head injuries more likely to use drugs, booze

Teenagers who have suffered a concussion or other traumatic brain injury are more likely to report using alcohol and drugs compared to peers with no history of such an injury, researchers have found.

Use of non-prescribed tranquilizers and opioids as well as illicit drugs like cannabis, cocaine and crystal meth was two to four times higher among Ontario high school students who had experienced a traumatic brain injury (TBI) than classmates who hadn't had a serious blow to the head, the researchers reported in a study published Wednesday in the Journal of Head Trauma Rehabilitation.

The study, which analyzed data from the 2011 Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey, found that one in five of the Grade 9 to 12 students reported they'd had a previous TBI.

Students in this group were also nearly twice as likely to have engaged in binge drinking — consuming five or more alcoholic drinks in one sitting — in the previous month.

"It's a really toxic combination when you have the two together," co-principal researcher Dr. Michael Cusimano said of mixing a head trauma with alcohol or drug use. "And it's alarming how early this is occurring."

As well, adolescence is an age when the brain is still developing — and having a TBI and exposing the brain to the effects of alcohol or drugs may "greatly impair" that development, he said.

Researchers defined a TBI as any hit or blow to the head that resulted in a student being knocked unconscious for at least five minutes or spending at least one night in hospital due to symptoms associated with the injury.

Data allowed researchers to determine substance use habits and TBI history, but not which came first — the brain injury or the alcohol and/or drug use. THE CANADIAN PRESS

TransCanada cuts ties with U.S. PR firm over campaign tactics

TransCanada has cut ties with multinational firm Edelman on the campaign to build support for a plan to bring Alberta's oil sands crude to eastern refineries after it recommended secretly using third parties to attack the pipeline's opponents.

The tactics were contained in documents leaked to the environmental group Greenpeace.

"In the current environment, we can't have the respectful conversation that we want to have with Canadians and Quebecers about Energy East," TransCanada spokesman Tim Duboyce said Wednesday in a release.

Edelman recommended working with proxies to secretly "add layers of difficulties for our opponents," the documents say. The plan suggested TransCanada conduct research on environmental groups and hand the results over to third parties. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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He's prepared. MP wears body camera to guard against 'besmirchment'

A Conservative MP issued a bizarre press release Wednesday claiming he uses a body-worn camera to guard against sexual-misconduct allegations.

Peter Goldring, MP for Edmonton-East, suggested such cameras can help elected officials "prevent besmirchment when encounters run awry."

"It will not be good enough to simply say that your intentions were honourable and you were just inviting a colleague to your apartment at two in the morning to play a game of Scrabble," Goldring said.

Peter Goldring
THE CANADIAN PRESS

"MPs must learn, as I have ... that all do not tell the truth. I now wear 'protection' in the form of body-worn video-recording equipment. I suggest others do so too."

Calls made to Goldring's office were not returned by press time. LUKE SIMCOE/METRO

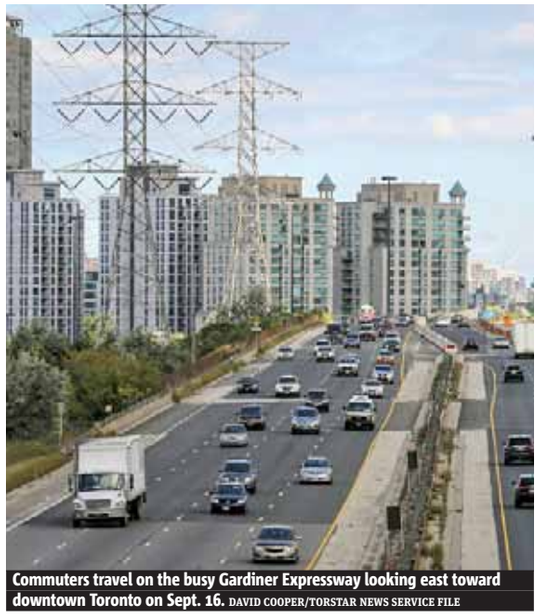
Ukraine

Canada donating cold-weather gear to Ukrainian army

Canada will send the Ukrainian army more than $22 million worth of cold-weather gear, including jackets and boots, Defence Minister Rob Nicholson said Wednesday.

The donations come from surplus military stocks. The green clothing dates from the late 1990s, a Defence official said. The Department of Foreign Affairs will follow up with an additional $5 million in non-lethal aid in the new year, including a field hospital, tactical radios, night-vision goggles and bomb-disposal equipment, Nicholson said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canadians actually like their commute: Study


Commuters travel on the busy Gardiner Expressway looking east toward downtown Toronto on Sept. 16. DAVID COOPER/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

Time to relax, reflect. Many people say commuting improves their mood: Report

Canadians actually enjoy their commute and find it relaxing. That's the conclusion of a study released by Toronto ad agency Bensimon Byrne — a finding that runs contrary to the popular vision of commuters as harried and fed up, if not enraged.

"Even more surprisingly, three-quarters of commuters report being in a better mood after their commute," according to the survey conducted for Bensimon Byrne by the Gandalf Group.

Quoted

"The results are an eye-opener."

Max Valiquette of Bensimon Byrne

"The results are an eye-opener and contradict the prevailing narrative of commuting, which is often conveyed as long and negatively affecting our work-life balance," said Max Valiquette, managing director of strategy for Bensimon Byrne.

"In fact, our findings show that having some time to relax and rest, or a few quiet moments to reflect is what makes commuting so important and desirable."

The online survey questioned 1,500 people in various regions of Canada, with an oversampling of commuters in the Greater Toronto Area.

Commuters in the GTA were less likely to be in a better mood after their commute (72 per cent) relative to the national average of 77 per cent, the survey found. And 16 per cent of respondents in the GTA dreaded their commute, versus the national average of 11 per cent. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Deluxe Island Room • Jan 10 & 31
$995 + $385 taxes

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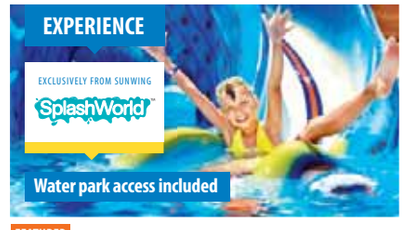

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Municipal employees demonstrate in front of Montreal city hall Wednesday during a day of protest against proposed changes to their pension plans. RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Protests against pension reforms

Quebec. Politicians stay firmly in favour of Bill 3, to the dismay of unionized employees

Provincial and municipal politicians were not backing down, despite demonstrations across Quebec Wednesday in a 24-hour protest against proposed pension reforms.

Proposed provincial legislation, known as Bill 3, calls for a 50-50 split between municipalities and unionized workers on pension contributions and deficits.

Quoted

"The solution comes through negotiation with our union partners."

Montreal Mayor Denis Coderre, in support of proposed pension reforms

Firefighters blocked the main access to the Port of Montreal and there were demonstrations in subway stations.

In Quebec City, municipal employees tried to block city buses. There was a protest at the construction site for a new $400-million amphitheatre.

A demonstration outside Montreal city hall took place as Mayor Denis Coderre presented the 2015 budget.

In August, council chamber was overrun by 250 unionized workers who tossed papers, threw water and smashed windows. Coderre continued to defend the legislation tabled by Premier Philippe Couillard's Liberals, saying it was a necessary measure.

"We have given our support to this bill because we are convinced the solution to the swelling costs of pension plans does not go through taxpayers' pockets," Coderre said on Wednesday.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

'Serious breach'

CRA leaked tax info to CBC

The Canada Revenue Agency confirmed late Tuesday that it has accidentally disclosed confidential taxpayer information to the CBC.

The agency said the document was "accidentally released" through human error and acknowledges this "constitutes a serious breach of privacy."

CBC reported that the tax information contains data about hundreds of Canadians — many of them rich and famous — including their home addresses. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Budget. Harper briefed on potential impact of cuts

Prime Minister Stephen Harper was briefed earlier this year on how across-the-board budget cuts hurt public service morale, productivity and citizen satisfaction.

The Privy Council provided Harper with a memo (obtained under Access to Information legislation) entitled Death by a Thousand Cuts: How governments undermine their own productivity. The memo lays out arguments from an Australian, union-funded study suggesting poorly executed austerity undermines trust and confidence in public institutions.

The Conservative government is on track for a budgetary surplus in 2015. Billed as "back office" or administrative cuts by Conservatives, the ongoing austerity measures are supposed to shrink departmental budgets without affecting programs or services — a promise the independent parliamentary budget office has been unable to verify even after taking the government to court in a fruitless effort to get a full public accounting. But the cumulative impact of cuts is attracting wider notice.

The Prime Minister's Office would not comment on the Australian study.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Fear of genetic discrimination swaying patients from testing

When reporter Jessica Smith Cross learned a Silicon Valley genetics testing service, 23andme, is now offering Canadians a $199 mail-in test, she was curious: How much could she learn from her DNA and how much should she learn? Today, Smith Cross looks into genetic discrimination and finds it's very real in Canada.

It's all in your genes

- This is the second in a three-part series in which reporter Jessica Smith Cross — who took 23andme's new mail-in genetic spit test — delves into the implications of increasingly easy testing in the complicated legal and ethical Canadian landscape.
- Tomorrow: Smith Cross on her results and whether or not to learn if she is predisposed to Alzheimer's.
- Read the whole package at metronews.ca

JESSICA SMITH CROSS
jessica.smithcross@metronews.ca

Dr. Ronald Cohn has a problem: His 12-year-old patient has one of two genetic diseases. One is treatable with medication, while the other requires constant monitoring and possible surgery to prevent sudden, early death. The question is: Which one does she have?

She and her father show symptoms — including extremely bendable joints and an enlarged heart vessel — consistent with the more easily treatable condition (Marfan syndrome), but also consistent with Loeys-Dietz, the potentially fatal disease.

Dr. Cohn has recommended the girl — or her father — undergo a painless genetic test, easily done using saliva. As both diseases are inherited, if the father has the genetic mutation causing Loeys-Dietz, the daughter would likely have it, too.

But her parents refused to consent to the test, fearing it would open the father and daughter to genetic discrimination.

"The father was very quick to understand, 'Well, if I do this and I don't have life insurance and long-term disability insurance at the moment, I won't be able to get it if I have the disease,'" Cohn, the co-director of the Centre for Genetic Medicine at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, told me.

Cohn said he has been treating the girl under the assumption she has Loeys-Dietz. The child comes to the hospital regularly for ultrasounds of her heart and management of a disease she may not have.

"She may not have to live with this," he said. "(If the test came out negative) the family wouldn't have to live with the anxiety that she has a very aggressive form of a heart disease."

Cohn is one of the proponents of the proposed Genetic Non-Discrimination Act to prevent genetic discrimination (for example, in employment or insurance coverage). The bill is currently before the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights. Cohn testified before the committee last month that fear of genetic discrimination has stopped many of his patients' parents from allowing genetic testing that could help their children and prevent unnecessary procedures.

Chiropractor Brynne Stainsby, seen in her Markham, Ont., office studio, faced genetic discrimination when she applied for insurance. TARIN ELBERT/METRO

Genetic discrimination is real

Brynne Stainsby has experienced first-hand how genetic discrimination can change a life.

Stainsby knew she had a 50-50 chance of having the gene that causes Huntington's disease, a neurodegenerative disorder.

As a student, she wanted to get tested but feared that should she find she had the gene, she would be denied insurance coverage — needed by law for her chosen profession of chiropractor.

But when Stainsby looked into disability and life insurance she was shocked to learn that she would be rejected by Canada's big insurers, unless she confirmed she did not have the gene.

"I was furious," she said. "You can't be discriminated against based on your gender, you can't be discriminated against based on your race. But it's reasonable you can be discriminated against based on your genes? Something you have literally no control over?"

Her father has the gene that causes Huntington's disease, but to this day exhibits no symptoms. Each case is different, depending on the gene's mutation. Since her father worked his entire career and retired healthy, it's likely she would, too, if found to have the gene.

She was able to get a policy with small coverage through an independent insurer — as she only had to tell them that she had no knowledge of personal health issues. They did not ask about family genetic history.

After getting the policy, she felt confident getting tested and found she does not carry the gene. She was then able to get a larger policy.

The insurance industry's stance

The insurance industry generally opposes the Genetic Non-Discrimination Act. Frank Zinatelli, vice-president and counsel for the Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association, said the industry has real concerns about the bill.

The industry fears people will take a genetic test, learn their life expectancy is short and then take out a policy and withhold that information, Zinatelli said. If this becomes a trend, the industry would have to raise insurance premiums across the board.

However, Canada's privacy commissioner's office disagrees. It commissioned research that found that a ban on the use of genetic test results by the life and health insurance industry would not have a significant impact on insurers or insurance markets. Similar legislation — the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) — is currently in place in the U.S.

However, Zinatelli argues that while genetic information is only used to a small degree today by both the industry and consumers, the industry expects it to be used more so in the future.

On the benefits of genetic testing

"She (a 12-year-old patient) may not have to live with this ... the family wouldn't have to live with the anxiety that she has a very aggressive form of a heart disease."

Dr. Ronald Cohn, co-director of the Centre for Genetic Medicine at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto

Senator's bill

- A spokesperson for Minister of Justice Peter McKay said the government will continue to review Sen. James Cowan's bill to ban genetic discrimination.
- He will also encourage the provinces to take steps to protect Canadians from genetic discrimination, as most workplaces fall under provincial labour law.

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Bob McCulloch. Prosecutor faces renewed criticism

He criticized the media. He talked about witness testimony that didn't match physical evidence. And he did it at night, as a city already on edge waited to learn if a grand jury would indict a white Ferguson police officer in the shooting death of an unarmed black 18-year-old.

St. Louis County Prosecutor Bob McCulloch — whose impartiality has been questioned since soon after Michael Brown was killed by Officer Darren Wilson on Aug. 9 — has come under renewed scrutiny since he appeared before television cameras to announce that the grand jury would not indict Wilson. A defensive McCulloch repeatedly cited what he said were inconsistencies and erroneous witness accounts. He never mentioned that Brown was unarmed.

St. Louis County Prosecutor Bob McCulloch THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Attorneys for Brown's family and activists said Tuesday that everything from how evidence was presented to the grand jury to the way McCulloch delivered the news of its decision bolstered their belief that the outcome was predetermined by McCulloch, who has deep family roots and relationships with police.

"This grand jury decision, we feel, is a reflection of the sentiment of those that presented the evidence," Anthony Gray, an attorney for Brown's family, said at a news conference.

Activists and Brown family attorneys had asked McCulloch — whose father, a police officer, was killed while responding to a call involving a black suspect — to appoint a special prosecutor. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ferguson begins cleanup after 2 nights of unrest

A protester is arrested outside of St. Louis City Hall on Wednesday. CHARLIE RIEDEL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hopes for continued calm. Wilson breaks long public silence

Business owners and residents boarded up windows and cleared away debris Wednesday as Ferguson sought a tentative return to normal after two nights of unrest over a grand jury decision not to indict a police officer in the shooting death of an unarmed black 18-year-old.

Protesters continued to hold scattered demonstrations, including a group that rushed into city hall in St. Louis, the city neighbouring Ferguson, screaming "Shame, shame." Police locked down the building and called in more than a hundred extra officers. Three people were arrested.

About 200 demonstrators marched through downtown St. Louis and held a mock trial of Darren Wilson, the white police officer who shot and killed Michael Brown during an Aug. 9 struggle.

The racially charged case has stoked passions nationwide, triggering debates over the relationship between black communities and law enforcement. Since the grand jury's decision was announced Monday night, protesters in cities throughout the country have rallied behind the refrain "hands up, don't shoot," and drawn attention to other police killings.

As the tension in Ferguson eased somewhat, Wilson broke his long public silence, insisting on national television that he could not have done anything differently in the Aug. 9 confrontation. The officer testified during the grand jury hearings that he felt threatened and that Brown tried to grab his gun, something the Brown family said they don't believe. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Ferguson fallout

The decision not to indict Darren Wilson for the shooting of Michael Brown continues to reverberate around the world.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MATT DUNHAM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

1 Solidarity

People outside the U.S. embassy in London hold banners and candles as they take part in a protest and vigil in support of people protesting in Ferguson, Mo., on Wednesday.

2 Families of black shooting victims unite

From left, Rev. Al Sharpton, Kimberly Ballinger, domestic partner and mother of Akai Gurley's daughter, Gwen Carr, mother of Eric Garner, and Lesley McSpadden, mother of Michael Brown, attend a news conference at National Action Network headquarters in New York, Wednesday. On the day before Thanksgiving, Sharpton brought together the families of Brown, Garner and Gurley, all black men recently killed by police officers. Background second from left is attorney Jonathan Moore.

RICHARD DREW/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

STEPHEN CHERNIN/INVISION/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

3 Garth Brooks opts out of Tonight show

Country music star Garth Brooks has cancelled a Thanksgiving appearance on NBC's Tonight show because he said it "seemed distasteful" given the reaction to the decision not to prosecute Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson for the shooting of Michael Brown this summer. NBC on Wednesday confirmed the postponement, saying Brooks was being replaced on the show by Whoopi Goldberg and Tom Colicchio.

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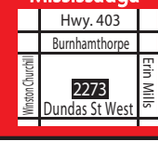

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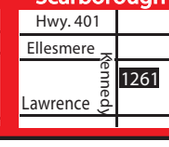

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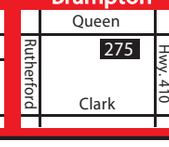


Hope. Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone may have reached peak: Minister

The Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone, which has been surging in recent days, may have reached its peak and could be on the verge of slowing down, Sierra Leone's information minister said Wednesday.

But in a reminder of how serious the situation is in Sierra Leone, the World Health Organization said the country accounted for more than half of the new cases in the hardest-hit countries in the past week. By contrast, infections appear to be either stabilizing or declining in Guinea and Liberia, where vigorous campaigning for a Senate election this week suggests the disease might be loosening its grip.

In all, 15,935 people have been sickened with Ebola in West Africa and other places it has occasionally popped up. Of those, 5,689 have died.

Alpha Kanu, Sierra Leone's minister of information, told journalists that, with the imminent completion of two British-built treatment centres, the worst could be over.

"We believe that now that those treatment centres are ready, the transmission of new cases will start reducing," he said. "I don't think we can get any higher than we are now — we are at the plateau of the curve ... we will have a downward trend, once we have somewhere to take people," said Kanu.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

'Far behind'

Sierra Leone has nearly 6,600 of the reported Ebola cases, with about 1,400 deaths, and the infections are increasing swiftly.

- The World Health Organization said Wednesday both Sierra Leone and Liberia appeared to be far behind the UN goal of isolating 70 per cent of patients by Dec. 1, with only 20 per cent isolated.

Iranian Jews finding new acceptance

In this photo collage, Iranian Jews each pose holding a painting of Moses with the Ten Commandments, after prayers at the Molla Agha Baba Synagogue, in the city of Yazd, 676 kilometres south of Tehran, Iran, a home for Jews for more than 3,000 years. It has the Middle East's largest Jewish population outside of Israel. Iran's Jews have found new acceptance from moderate President Hassan Rouhani.

EBRAHIM NOROOZI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nigeria

Boko Haram suspected of killing villagers

Suspected Boko Haram gunmen killed at least 20 people in an attack Monday on two villages on the outskirts of Chibok, the town where more than 200 schoolgirls were abducted in April, said a Nigerian official.

Attackers struck Kamtahi and Galtimari villages, burning houses and forcing residents to flee, said Muhammed Abbas Gava. "Virtually every house in the two villages was burnt to ash," said Gava.

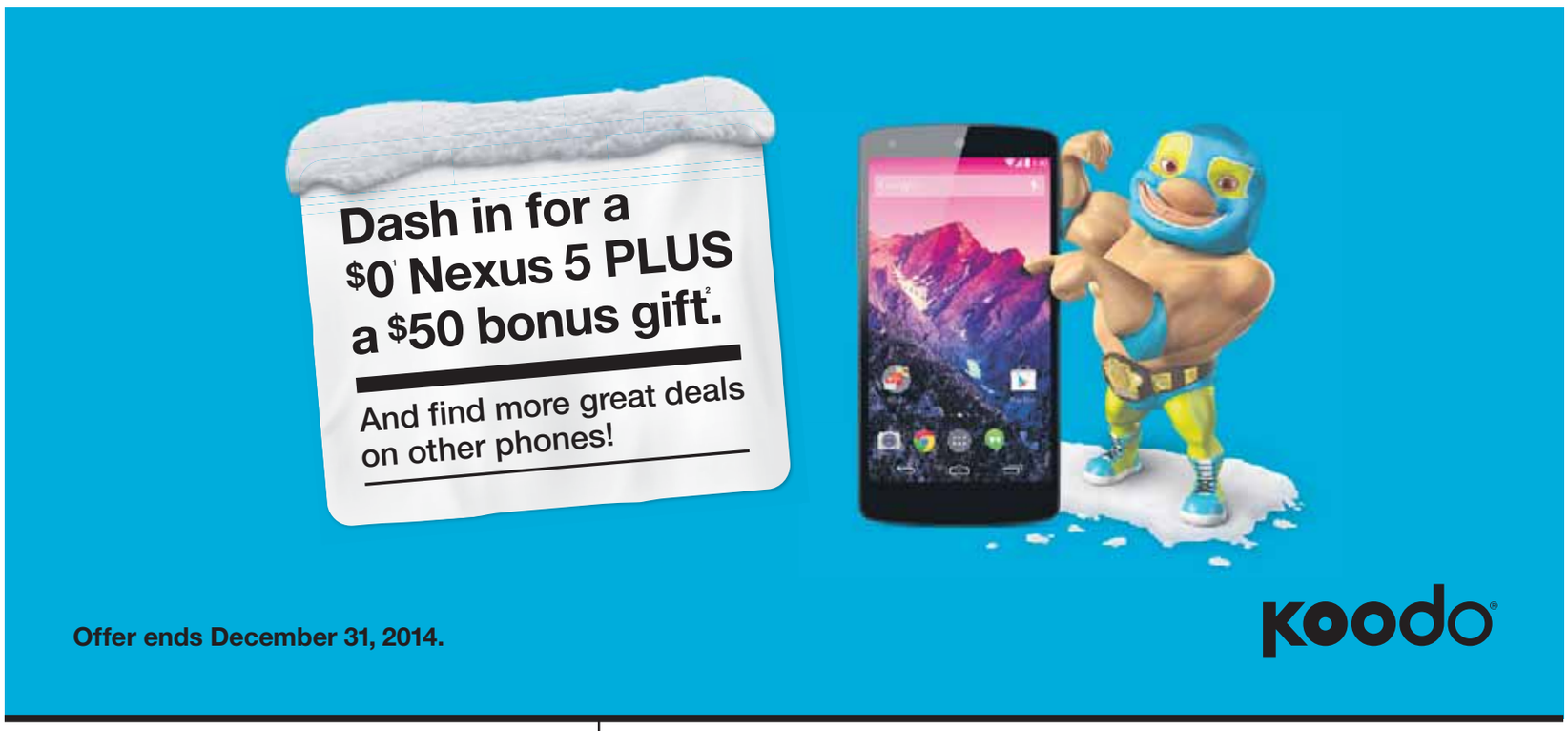
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Syria

Airstrikes on Islamic State stronghold kill at least 95

The death toll from a series of Syrian government airstrikes on the Islamic State group's stronghold in northeastern Syria has risen to at least 95, making it one of the deadliest attacks on the city of Raqqa in the past three years, activists said Wednesday.

Some of the Tuesday airstrikes hit a popular market near a museum, causing many civilian casualties. At least 120 others were wounded. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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Overhaul our tax system, report says

C.D. Howe Institute. A revamp of Canada's system would create fairness, argues paper's author

A new research paper for the C.D. Howe Institute says Canada can help combat rising income inequality by taxing people separately for their paycheque and investment income.

The paper's author says applying a flat rate on investment income would create fairness by closing legal, taxation-avoiding tactics — mostly used by higher-income earners.

Kevin Milligan of the University of British Columbia also recommends adding a tax bracket for annual incomes of $250,000 and perhaps another one at $400,000.

Milligan says the changes could open the door to other reforms on consumption taxes, environmental taxes and corporate taxes — which could help promote economic growth.

He says Canada's income-inequality gap has widened considerably over the past 30 years, even though it hasn't kept pace with the divide in the United States.

Quoted

"We need to look seriously at a number of tax reforms that would improve the efficiency of our economy and provide a better environment for investment to provide the jobs for the future."

Kevin Milligan, a fellow-in-residence for the C.D. Howe think-tank, in an interview

Rich get richer

150%

The paper's author says over the past 30 years Canadians in the top 0.01 per cent of earners have seen their incomes rise by 150 per cent, while those in the bottom 90 per cent have only seen eight per cent growth

Still, he says over that period Canadians in the top 0.01 per cent of earners have seen their incomes rise by 150 per cent, while those in the bottom 90 per cent have only seen eight per cent growth.

Canada's tax system, Milligan added, was developed in the 1960s and no longer fits today's economic reality.

"What's interesting is our tax system hasn't responded at all to that very large change in the distribution of income," said Milligan, also a fellow-in-residence for the C.D. Howe think-tank, in an interview.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Thanksgiving in England

Danny Lidgate displays a turkey at his butcher shop in Holland Park in London on Tuesday. Plump turkeys in butcher-shop windows. Harvest displays of pumpkin and corn. Sandwich boards describing groaning feasts. Thanksgiving isn't a holiday in Britain, but you might be forgiven for being fooled. It's not hard to find someone to talk turkey, never mind sell you one. That's because there are so many Americans in Britain these days that dozens of businesses have started selling the goods they need to celebrate.

KIRSTY WIGGLESWORTH/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Had forecast a loss

Canada Post on track for profit

Despite more people still choosing email over snail mail, the Canada Post Group of Companies says it's on track to earn a profit this year, defying an earlier forecast for a multimillion-dollar loss.

The Crown corporation said it earned $84 million before tax for the first three quarters of the year, driven by its parcels business and higher stamp prices.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Firearm background checks piling up

America. Black Friday marks the start of the busiest season for gun purchases, as states are already scrambling to provide information

More gun sales than ever are slipping through the federal background-check system in the U.S. — 186,000 last year, a rate of 512 gun sales a day, as states fail to consistently provide thorough, real-time updates on criminal and mental histories to the FBI.

At no time of year is this problem more urgent. This Friday opens the busiest season for gun purchases, when requests for background checks speed up to nearly two a second, testing the limits of the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, or NICS.

The stakes are high: In the U.S., there are already nine guns for every 10 people, and someone is killed with a firearm every 16 minutes. Mass shootings are happening every few weeks.

"We have a perfect storm coming," FBI manager Kimberly Del Greco told The Associated Press during a rare glimpse into the inner workings of the system.

Much of the responsibility for preventing criminals and the mentally ill from buying guns is shouldered by about 500 men and women who run the system from inside the FBI's criminal-justice centre, a grey office building with concrete walls and mirrored windows just outside Bridgeport, West Va.

By federal law, NICS researchers must race against the clock: They have until the end of the third business day following an attempted firearm purchase to determine whether or not a buyer is eligible.

"They won't proceed or deny a transaction unless they are ABSOLUTELY certain the information they have is correct and sufficient to sustain that decision," FBI spokesman Stephen G. Fischer told The Associated Press.

In roughly two per cent of the checks handled by the FBI, agents don't get this information in time.

If three business days pass without a federal response, buyers can legally get their guns, whether or not the check was completed.

Americans are buying more than twice as many guns a year now as they did when the background checks were first implemented in 1998. And that means more gun sales are effectively beating the system.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Canada

High housing prices, debt key risks: IMF

The International Monetary Fund issued a warning Wednesday that a hot housing market and mounting household debt represent key domestic risks to Canada's economic growth.

But in releasing its latest report card for Canada, the IMF predicted a soft landing for the housing market and described the economy's performance as relatively stable in the global context, thanks to an improving export sector and stronger U.S. growth.

An IMF official said Wednesday that Canada's housing market is over-evaluated by roughly 10 per cent on a national scale, though in some regions those estimates could reach as high as 20 per cent.

"So, for us it remains a concern," Hamid Faruqee told a news conference in Ottawa.

He cautioned Canada could be at risk of a sharp correction if interest rates rose too quickly and the labour market suffered a downturn.

The IMF report said government measures introduced since 2008 have been "broadly effective" in dealing with stability risks in the housing market, helping to limit the growth of insured mortgage credit and beef up credit standards as prices increased. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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VOICES

IT'S NOT ABOUT GHOMESHI

Metro's Kristen Thompson wishes we weren't talking about the disgraced radio host facing criminal charges, either. But to not talk about it is to ignore the countless victims of sexual assault that need us to keep the conversation going

KRISTEN THOMPSON
kristen.thompson@metronews.ca

Police try to clear a path as Jian Ghomeshi makes his way through a mob of media to a waiting vehicle at a Toronto court Wednesday.
NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sick of hearing about Jian Ghomeshi?

Let me inundate you with even more analysis, not because I want to make you miserable, but because I think it's important. In fact, I think it's a matter of life and death. Before you turn the page, hear me out.

Jian Ghomeshi has been charged and the case is in the courts, but this isn't the time to turn our backs on the story.

If we do so, it will end an important dialogue about sexual violence, and that puts women in danger.

Dalya Israel, manager of victims services at Women Against Violence Against Women, a rape crisis centre in Vancouver, agrees.

High-profile cases of sexual assault are an opportunity to talk about what constitutes consent, and to educate men and boys about what it means to value another human being as equal, Israel said. Because of this, it's imperative to keep the discourse going.

For the women who have accused Ghomeshi of assault — especially those who may have to testify — these charges also signal the start of another chapter, one that can be hugely painful.

Victims of sex assault, who may have already told their story to police and their lawyer, may also have to testify at a preliminary inquiry and then in court, re-living their experience over and over for what could be months or years.

With women's sexuality already being highly scrutinized in our society, having it analyzed and questioned in court, and — in high-profile cases — in the media, is humiliating and degrading, said Israel.

"It's incredibly difficult to have to re-tell and talk about all of the fine details," she said.

Fear of humiliation and being re-victimized through the legal process is why Israel said around 70 per cent of women she works with don't want to go to police. Some general statistics would place that number even higher, at around 90 per cent.

These people often face depression and thoughts of suicide.

"There are many, many women that absolutely don't want to go through the process and feel like it would be way worse than just healing from the assault," she said. "But there are equally women that … want to be able to tell their truth in court and want somebody to know what this person has done to them.

"I think we've kind of seen that with … what's going on in the Cosby case," she said.

Israel said it can be validating for some women to know others have come forward.

"Some women feel like finally (they) don't have to keep a secret anymore."

So if you're sick of hearing about Ghomeshi, stop and think about why we're being oversaturated with this story.

It's not about Ghomeshi; it's about sexual violence.

And if we close the door on this story, we close the door on victims of assault.

Not everyone wants to report

"There are many, many women that absolutely don't want to go through the process."

Dalya Israel, rape crisis centre manager

Watershed moment won't come, but change is happening

EDWARD KEENAN
readers@metronews.ca

We believe you. We believe you. We believe you.

It's a message that has grown into a mantra in the court of public opinion over the past month, expressed in sadness and anger, in support of the women who have spoken about being allegedly sexually and physically abused by Jian Ghomeshi.

At the same time, it has suddenly become the message to women, ignored for years when they talked about being drugged and raped by Bill Cosby.

It was the message Justin Trudeau seemed to want to convey in expelling two members of his caucus over reports from women who are members of a different party.

Yesterday the police delivered the same message to three of the women who formally reported their stories about Ghomeshi:

We believe you.

The stories of these women have seized the consciousness of the moment. It seems possible to imagine that perhaps the same message will carry to every woman who is raped, assaulted, or harassed; to every victim of sexual abuse with a story she's been afraid to tell: We will believe you.

Or perhaps it has just become possible for many to allow themselves to hope for it.

Progress

It feels like a crack has opened up in the understanding of many people. Including me.

My friend Denise Balkissoon wrote a column last month for the Globe and Mail that read like a rhetorical flamethrower incinerating any sanctimonious talk of "watershed moments" or cultural breakthroughs when it comes to violence against women.

She had reported domestic abuse to the police, saw the perpetrator sentenced to probation, and found the reporting process "essentially useless and thoroughly disappointing."

I hear and understand Denise. More than that, I believe her that we should resist the impulse to congratulate ourselves on reaching the promised land of wisdom and sensitivity. It's not a watershed.

But it is something. Something is shifting. It feels real.

There's a conversation going on, one that feels like progress.

It's not enough, and it will not suddenly and permanently transform the culture. But it feels like a crack has opened up in the understanding of many people. Including me.

As a man, a father, a citizen, a human being, I hope it is the start of something sustained, a longer process to better understanding, better treatment of each other, better lives.

There likely is no "watershed moment" to be had, because such societal changes are a gradual process.

But this month, leading up to the arrest of Ghomeshi this week, marks some kind of milestone in that process in Toronto and in Canada.

A time when many women started feeling more comfortable — or more compelled by anger — to talk about their experiences.

And when many of us were shocked into hearing them when we had been negligently deaf for years.

Here's a prayer offered in hope rather than expectation: Let "we believe you" become our response to any woman who tells us about how she has been hurt.

And then let us make real changes to our attitudes, behaviour and institutions so that fewer women have such stories to tell.

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HUDSON'S BAY

TOPMAN

It's lonely being out at the game

Memoir. Robbie Rogers shares what it's like to be an openly gay pro athlete in the U.S.

Robbie Rogers simultaneously came out and retired from pro soccer in a a blog post in February 2013, thinking he couldn't be an openly gay man and pro soccer player. He has since returned to the field. GETTY IMAGES

Los Angeles Galaxy soccer star Robbie Rogers wants some company, now that he's the last man standing as an openly gay athlete in a U.S. professional league.

Jason Collins recently retired from the NBA, and Michael Sam is without an NFL team. That leaves Rogers, the first openly gay player in Major League Soccer, hoping for a bigger fraternity.

"To be honest, I thought when I came out and Jason and Michael, I thought there'd be a chain reaction," Rogers said in a recent phone interview. "It's been a lot slower. I guess that just reminds me how big a problem it is in sports culture with homophobia. They don't feel comfortable."

Rogers chronicles his struggles with soccer, faith and family acceptance in the memoir Coming Out To Play, released this week by Penguin Books. It's a collaborative effort with Eric Marcus, who co-wrote Greg Louganis' book, and recollections from his mother and oldest sister. Rogers discusses growing up in Southern California, playing soccer in U.S. and European leagues and dealing with his sexuality.

On Sunday, he helped the Galaxy defeat Seattle 1-0 in the opener of the Western Conference finals. He's been a key defender this season after briefly retiring from the sport last year at age 25.

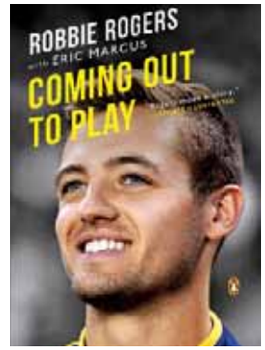
Rogers recently signed a contract extension, and the Galaxy players have embraced him. But locker rooms notoriously weren't a safe environment to talk about sexuality, except for teammates bragging about their heterosexual conquests.

"Like every locker room I'd been in for years now, 'fag' and 'gay' were tossed around like an all-purpose putdown," he wrote. "It cut deeper into an already raw wound."

So Rogers stifled his feelings, occasionally dating women to please his questioning teammates and family. After playing five seasons for the Columbus Crew in MLS, with stints in the Netherlands and England, he realized his happiness required living an authentic life. So he simultaneously came out and retired in a blog post in February 2013, thinking he couldn't be an openly gay man and a pro soccer player.

But an outpouring of support, conversations with Los Angeles star Landon Donovan and an invitation from Galaxy coach Bruce Arena to train with the team caused a change of heart.

Now the Galaxy are vying for a spot in the MLS final, Rogers is in a steady relationship and hoping more pro sports leagues provide education about diversity. That way, a teammate might think twice before throwing around gay slurs in the locker room.



Early years

Rogers was a prodigy growing up, playing organized soccer at four. As a teenager, he competed on the Orange County Blue Star team. Jurgen Klinsmann, now the coach of the U.S. national team, would occasionally stop by. His favourite players were European stars Thierry Henry and Zinedine Zidane. After helping Maryland win the 2005 NCAA title as a freshman, Rogers turned pro and went to the Netherlands. Playing for Leeds United in 2012, he sustained a concussion 12 minutes into his debut, colliding with an opponent while going for a header. An ankle injury intensified his depression and isolation, and he eventually returned to the U.S.

Comfort zone

There are currently no openly gay players in the NFL, NHL or Major League Baseball. "There are a number of gay men playing professional sports, just not out," Rogers says. "In the end, it's really about guys coming out and changing the atmosphere by being in it. You definitely need to create the environment first where guys feel comfortable."

Baseball hired Billy Bean, who came out after his MLB career, to talk to all 30 teams about inclusion. Rogers says teams need to educate players on "racism, sexism and homophobia. The leagues should have a person their guys can go talk to, honestly. Talk about mental health or depression or guys wanting to come out."

Family/faith

Rogers heard negative comments about gay people at home, church, school and in the locker room. He considers his family "socially and politically conservative and very Catholic." Rogers says his family is loving and close, yet there were harsh comments from his father about not being a "fairy" and negative comments from his mother about gay celebrities and gay marriage.

"Growing up, I heard and saw plenty that made me think that being gay was bad, defective and sinful," Rogers wrote.

He came out to his family, despite the fear of rejection, before posting his blog. Now he says his parents, three sisters and younger brother are his biggest supporters.

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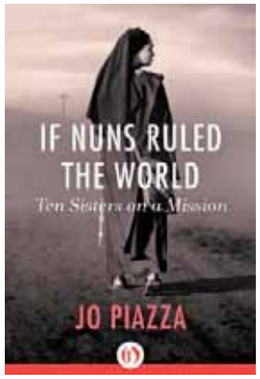


Author looks beyond the Sister act

Books. From running colleges to hospitals, nuns were the first feminists, says author who researched them

LAKSHMI GANDHI
Metro in New York City

Since the release of If Nuns Ruled the World: Ten Sisters on a Mission this fall, author Jo Piazza says she's received a new note from a different Catholic nun nearly every time she checks her email.

"It's a lot of 'Thank you for telling this story that hasn't been told yet. Thank you for acknowledging us,'" says Piazza, whose book was recently featured at a literary salon hosted by the New York Foundling and author Aidan Donnelley Rowley. "And that's the part that sort of breaks my heart."

The author says that travelling with, and getting to know, each of the 10 sisters she profiles in the book taught her just how misunderstood and stereotyped nuns were, by both the Catholic community and the general population.

"I'm a very healthy and open-minded agnostic," says Piazza, who attended Catholic schools growing up. "I think I love the nuns so much because they don't wear their religion on their sleeves, they just practise it."

Piazza shared some of the other things she learned while writing the book.

Nuns are not meek

When you think of a Catholic nun, you probably don't picture a woman who volunteers as an abortion clinic escort or a woman in jail for protesting against nuclear weapons.

But those are just two examples of the women Piazza met with while writing her book. "These are the women who are the very first feminists," says Piazza. "They were running colleges, they were running hospitals. They have amazing careers."

Nuns are not just teachers

Piazza says she hears all the time from former Catholic school students who complain about the times they were hit with rulers in class.

"It's mostly men that say that, too. And then I just say, 'Did you deserve it? You probably were a little jerk, weren't you?'" she says. "That's one of the myths about nuns that people like to say. And it's not true; it's a stereotype. All of the nuns I know are just loving, dynamic women."

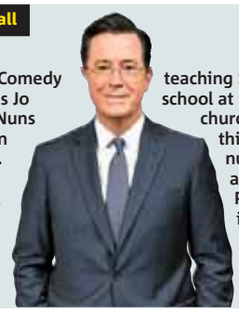
Quote

"It's mostly men that say (they were hit with rulers in class). And then I just say, 'Did you deserve it? You probably were a little jerk, weren't you?'" Author Jo Piazza

After getting to know the 10 sisters she profiles in her book, author Jo Piazza says nuns are misunderstood and unfairly stereotyped by society. ISTOCK

Colbert and baseball

Nuns love a certain Comedy Central star, confirms Jo Piazza, author of If Nuns Ruled the World: Ten Sisters on a Mission. "Nuns love Stephen Colbert," she dishes, which should be no surprise, since the late-night host is well-known for



teaching Sunday school at his local church. Other things the nuns raved about to Piazza include red wine, cats and baseball.

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From sexy science to Parisian fantasies

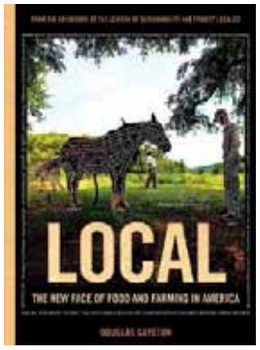
Books. The best food books of 2014 are all about cooking with exotic ingredients and trendy world cuisine

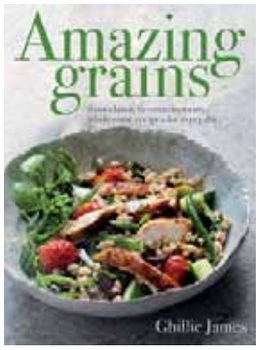
Geeks, grains and globe-trotting: Nearly all of this year's best food books seems to fall into one of those categories.

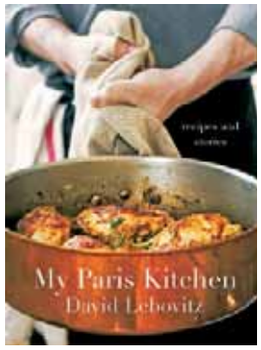
For those of us who watch the food world, there is some logic to that. Chefs have become fascinated by the hows and whys of cooking, delving into the science of the kitchen to find new ways to master delicious. Publishers are finally learning how to make food science sexy to the home cook.

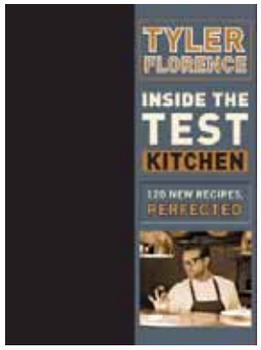
Meanwhile, we're always searching for the new "it" food. Wacky grains got their moment this year. And since ethnic is mainstream, cookbooks that help us grasp global cuisine hit a splendid pace.

So whether you're in the market for a gift or just looking to bulk up your own collection, here are some picks for the best food books of 2014:









The geeks

Most cookbooks dedicated to cooking science miss the mark, assuming readers are either would-be lab jockeys hankering for esoteric ingredients or obsessives who will not rest till they master roasted chicken. That leaves the rest of us scratching our heads.

But Cooking Light magazine columnist Keith Schroeder understands average cooks can benefit from food science, too. His cookbook, Mad Delicious: The Science of Making Healthy Food Taste Amazing (Oxmoor House, $35), gently and comically guides readers through 126 everyday classics, explaining what to do and why. And his recipe format is genius. Each ingredient is accompanied by a brief explanation of its role in the recipe. The result: You learn just by assembling your shopping list.

On the hardcore end of the spectrum is Tyler Florence's Inside the Test Kitchen (Clarkson Potter, $35). He blows up conventional thinking on classic recipes, coming up with creative ways to do the basics better. His egg-roll omelette alone is worth the price.

The grains

If brown rice and barley still count as exotic in your kitchen, it's time to catch up. Running parallel to vegetables getting sexy, unusual grains, seeds and legumes are suddenly hot, and more available. But most folks find them intimidating.

It's not enough for cookbooks to explain how to use unusual ingredients. They need to inspire you to want to. And that's why Molly Brown's Grains (Hardie Grant Books, $34.95) and Ghillie James' Amazing Grains (Kyle Books, $29.95) stand out. Both build comfort with the unfamiliar, as well as making you eager to get in the kitchen.

The globe-trotters

As the world gets smaller, our culinary reach broadens. Numerous wonderful books want to help us make sense of it all.

For the big picture, we have David Joachim's Global Kitchen (Oxmoor House, $29.95), another entry under the Cooking Light banner. It is simply a gorgeous book that immediately captures the beauty and breadth of world cuisine. The recipes make it enticing to embrace new dishes.

For anyone hankering for a Parisian fantasy, start with David Lebovitz's My Paris Kitchen. A blogger and author who moved from the U.S. to Paris a decade ago. He makes French cooking accessible.

England's Nigel Slater offers up Eat (Ten Speed Press, $27.99), a collection of 600 straightforward dinner ideas that are global in scope, but midweek-friendly in manner. This book, organized by cooking method, should live on your counter.

Finally, global in thought, if not in geography, is Douglas Gayeton's Local: The New Face of Food and Farming in America (Harper Design, $35). This stunning book tells the story of sustainable food via profiles of dozens of thinkers, growers and producers. Anyone who cares about food will care about this book.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Prince has closed his Twitter and Facebook accounts. AFP

Music. Prince vanishes from social media sites

Prince, whose distaste for the music industry's conventions is well known, has abruptly disappeared from social media after tentative efforts to promote his two new albums.

The star's Twitter and Facebook accounts have both disappeared and almost all videos from his official account had been taken off YouTube. He offered no explanation.

But his two latest albums, which he released in September, remained on the streaming service Spotify.

The move puts Prince at odds with most musicians, who consider social media a virtual obligation to fans.

Several stars — most famously Taylor Swift — have criticized Spotify, accusing it of insufficient payouts to artists, but have invested sustained energy in Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

Prince used social media to promote the latest two albums but had barely disguised his lack of enthusiasm. He advertised a Facebook question-and-answer session after he joined the site but, after hours of queries, he responded to just one — an esoteric matter about audio tuning — by offering a link to an article. AFP

Movies. MacLaren will direct Wonder Woman

The director known for her work on Game of Thrones, Breaking Bad, The Walking Dead and The Leftovers has signed on to direct the first movie dedicated to the iconic DC superhero Wonder Woman.

Michelle MacLaren was reportedly in talks with Warner for months but her involvement was just made official.

The Wonder Woman movie will likely be the first in a trilogy, starting out in the 1920s on the character's Amazonian island. The following instalment is set to take place in the 1930s and '40s during the Second World War, with the last film seeing her join the Justice League alongside Batman, Aquaman and Superman.

The anticipation will build in the meantime, as Gal Gadot is set to make her debut as Wonder Woman in the 2016 movie Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice, before starring in other Justice League projects.

Wonder Woman is to start filming by the end of 2015.

{{caption| 515_Photo caption xyxy}}
/ {{CREDIT|515_PHOTO CREDIT}}

The movie is slated for release in 2017, one year after Batman v Superman. AFP

Movies

Ridley Scott won't direct Blade Runner 2

Although Ridley Scott is still producing the sequel to his 1982 Blade Runner film and working on the script, someone else will direct it, he tells Variety. Busy with Prometheus, The Martian, his Ebola-themed TV project and his production activities, Scott had to make a choice. He also confirmed that Harrison Ford will once again take the role of Rick Deckard, although he won't lead the cast. Since the film will follow a three-act storyline, the filmmaker explained: "Harrison is very much part of this one, but really it's about finding him; he comes in in the third act." AFP

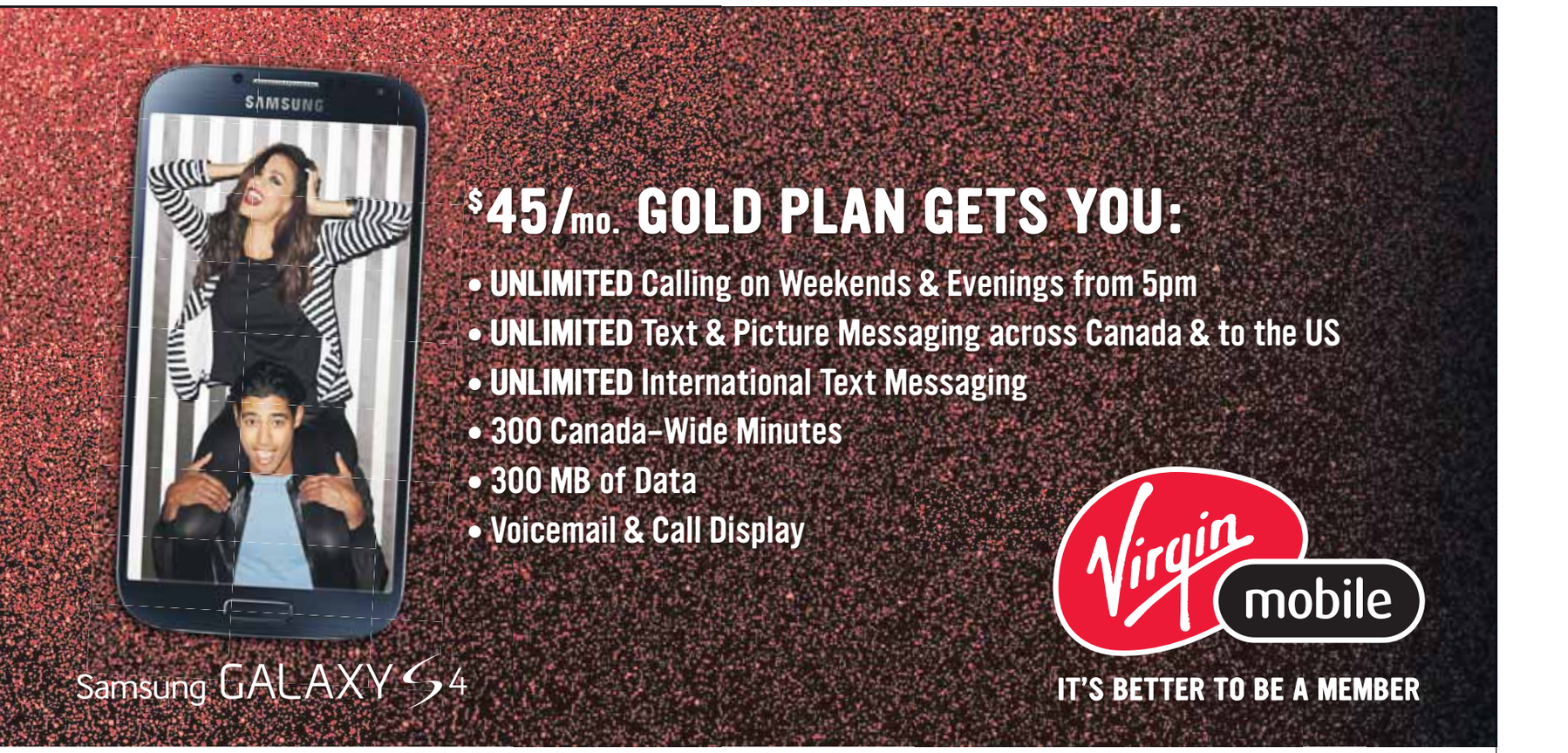
Ridley Scott GETTY IMAGES

Film

Michael Keaton CONTRIBUTED

Birdman tops Independent Spirit nominees

Surreal theatre drama Birdman starring Michael Keaton topped nominations for the Independent Spirit movie awards announced Tuesday, with nods in six categories. The Spirit awards, which aim to honour excellence in independent film, will be handed out on Feb. 21. Birdman, about a former superhero movie star attempting to resurrect his career on Broadway, was nominated for best feature, best actor, best supporting actor and actress, best director and best cinematography. AFP



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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Analysis

Jaden Smith GETTY IMAGES

The wit and wisdom of Jaden Smith

To celebrate Thanksgiving in the U.S., we're going to overdo it with the wit and wisdom of the incomparable Jaden Smith. Here, some of his best work:

@officialjaden
I Don't Want You Guys To Think Because I Was Born In America That I Speak And Abide By English Grammar. I Speak Jaden, Indefinitely.

@officialjaden
I've Bin Drinking Distilled Water For So Long That When I Drink Normal Water It Feels Like I'm Swallowing Huge Chunks Of Aluminum.

@officialjaden
Every 7 Years Your Body Is Completely Replaced With Entirely New Cells So Just Because You Look The Same Doesn't Mean You Are.

This week in Friends reunion denials

It's become apparent that part of being in the cast of Friends means fielding questions about a theoretical reunion at every single interview, as Jennifer Aniston, Courteney Cox, Lisa Kudrow, Matthew Perry, Matt LeBlanc and David Schwimmer are learning. OK, maybe not so much Schwimmer because no one's been interviewing him lately, but still. As Graham Norton recently asked Jennifer Aniston, "Do you and the other Friends just think, 'Why don't we just do the reunion so people will stop wanging on about it?'" — which is clever, but still a way of wanging on about it. So, what do the latest crop of denials — or the opposite — look like? Here you go:

NED EHRBAR/METRO IN HOLLYWOOD

Jennifer Aniston

"I say we just wait until we're really much older and be just Golden Friends because then you wouldn't have the comparisons like, 'Oh, look at Joey. What happened to them?'" Or: "Oh no, dead Friends. Then we'll know that there's no reunion to have."

Courteney Cox

"It's not going to happen. Let me tell you something: There's six Friends, and I've been trying to put together a cast dinner for 10 years. It doesn't happen! I can get the girls to come, maybe Matthew Perry. Matt LeBlanc cancelled last time right at the last minute, Schwimmer lives (in New York City), so it's just not gonna happen."

Lisa Kudrow

"I'll go for it. A whole season, because to spend that much time with those people again would be heaven."

Matt LeBlanc

"I'm not tired of getting asked that question at all. As far as a reunion project, that's just not in the cards ... I think it's best to imagine what those characters are doing now versus to see those characters. No one wants to see us in our 40s. Joey's still struggling as an actor. It'd just be sad."

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The Daily Dish

WIFE GOES OUT OF HER WAY TO SAVE TIME

According to Amanda from British Columbia, after trying OxiClean™ Extreme Power Crystals™ Dishwasher Detergent Paks, her family is so in love with its time-saving benefits and cleaning power that "we now make a special trip"* when they need to get more. Clearly for this woman, even special trips mean saving time on dirty dishes, and spending time with the family. You go, girl.

*"We now make a special trip..."**
— Amanda, Fernie

Soup ladle's dirty past tied to old detergent

After a lifetime of neglect, a soup ladle's owner, Monique, has finally revealed why it has constantly felt dirty over the years, The Daily Dish reports. Her old dishwasher detergent seems to be the culprit. New OxiClean™ Dishwasher Detergent Paks heard about the story and came to the rescue. Since then, she has told us, "the results were remarkable."*

*"...the results were remarkable."**
— Monique, Scarborough

TEENAGER DOES DISHES. MOM IN SHOCK.

An astonishing turn of events unfolded as one mother came home from work to find her dishwasher completely empty. Authorities were called to the scene, but after interviewing her teenage daughter, they soon discovered the dishes neatly stacked in their respective cupboards shortly after she arrived home from school. In a statement from the daughter, she claims having the convenience of OxiClean™ Extreme Power Crystals™ Dishwasher Detergent Paks made it "no biggie." A student of complex algebra, it appears she's discovered the equation to her mother's heart.

*All stories depicted within this advertisement are fictional in nature. *Quotes are from real consumer reviews submitted for OxiClean™ Extreme Power Crystals™ Dishwasher Detergent Paks on ChickAdvisor.com as of November 3, 2014. Reviewers received free product sample.*

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†Source: ChickAdvisor.com reviews for OxiClean™ Extreme Power Crystals™ Dishwasher Detergent Paks. Percent of chicks who "dig it" as of November 3, 2014. Reviewers received free sample.

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LIFE 3

Winter's hottest fashion trends

The cold winter season has declared its arrival, but there's no shortage of must-have new trends to keep you looking chic all season long. We asked two of New York City's top fashion bloggers to break down the looks you need to get your hands on now.

METRO NEWS IN NEW YORK

Oversized coats and pastels

Many of the leading looks this winter are all about length. Case in point: dramatically oversized coats paired with mini-dresses and above-the-knee skirts — an unexpected look for the winter season.

"It's a big surprise when you think about the colder months," says fashion blogger Chanel van der Meijden of Cocorosa.

Also going strong in outerwear is the pastel-coloured coat. When it comes to bundling up, shades of soft pink and baby blue are all the rage.

Forever 21 Textured Longline Coat, $72, forever21.com

Banana Republic Teddy Coat, $275, bananarepublic.ca

Above-the-knee boots

Playful lengths are also extending to footwear. Hot this winter are thigh-high, over-the-knee boots. A unique spin on the look takes the form of flats, says Framel.

"We're so accustomed to seeing the over-the-knee, high-heel, slightly sexy version," she says. "A flat boot is especially fresh, like the coolest interpretation this season."

Military-inspired shoes are another look to invest in. Boots with lots of buckling details and hints of that signature olive green are particularly popular. If it's a more feminine look you're after, booties are a dainty alternative.

"Another shoe trend that totally excites me is the kitten-heeled, pointed-toe, lace-up bootie," says van der Meijden.

Clarey Over-the-Knee Boots, $239, guess.ca

Frye Melissa Over-the-Knee Boot, $648, thebay.com

Knits, knits, knits

One of the strongest looks this winter is knitwear. On the runway, this includes head-to-toe knit suits and trousers. The trend is really all about size, also taking the form of chunky woven sweaters and bulky knitwear tops.

"The way it's being translated [from the runway] is really big, oversized sweaters and extreme turtlenecks," says Kelly Framel, creative director of the wildly popular site The Glamourai. "Everything this season is just so big, so extreme — they're almost dresses."

Titika Active Couture Julia Sweater, $72, titika.ca

Big ol' earrings

It's official: Big earrings are back. While the trend for the last few seasons has been more about refined, delicate jewelry, be prepared to see more big-statement pieces this winter.

"The fashion version of that is to wear only one (earring) and to wear the biggest earring possible," says Framel. "But in general, these chandelier and interesting statement earrings are definitely coming back."

Translation? Big, glitzy earrings perfect for the holidays.

Modern Flapper Drop Earrings, $34, urbanoutfitters.com

H&M Earrings, $19, hm.com

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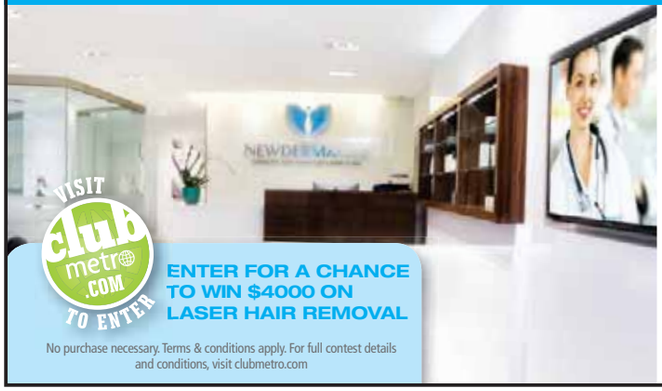

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Canadian street style

Spotted in: Toronto

Name: Lindsey

Age: 20

Occupation: Marketing Co-ordinator

What she's wearing
Jeffrey Campbell shoes, Zara tights, Calvin Klein blouse, Ganni jacket, and her Oma's hat.

Her inspiration
"I like clothing that transitions well from day to night. Comfort is also very important to me. If it feels like I am not wearing clothing, it's a good thing."

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Nothing like party-ready red lips for the holidays

Style. Read my lips: I want to celebrate without the smudge

A smooch remedy that would make me look sultry sans the smeer? Sign me up! ISTOCK

Colour bleed be damned. There's a red lipstick for everybody nowadays.

You know how celebrity beauty guru Ted Gibson found that out?

"My mother has just now been wearing red lipstick since I turned her on to it over the last two years. Before, she thought red meant you were kind of easy," he laughed.

Red no longer evokes sexpot alone, and it doesn't have to lead to severe chapping. Shades of red can be had in balms, glosses, creamy mattes or a combination of care and colour — or CC as they say in the beauty biz.

If you're unsure of shade, swipe a bit on the inside of one arm the next time you're in a store, then step outside into natural light for a better idea of how it will look.

And if you're traumatized by lip colour seeping into lines and crevasses beyond where it's supposed to be, use a primer underneath or a lip liner as a barrier. Apply concealer around the outside of the mouth for extra protection against bleed.

"What's great right now is that there are some really creamy, dense highly pigmented red lipsticks that are fantastic for people who really want to go for that power pout look. There are also sheer reds for those of us who don't feel so comfortable or who may feel like a clown with a big red mouth," said Alexandra Parnass, beauty director at Harper's Bazaar.

And there's no better time than the holidays to get creative with red for the lips, the two agreed, noting how well the colour goes with holiday gold and urging a breaking of traditional skin complexion rules. Go for what feels and looks right on you alone.

Even better, pick up a tube or two as a gift or stocking stuffer.

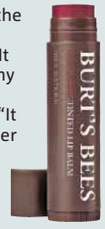
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

You light up my lips

Smoochable suggestions from Gibson, Parnass and others

BURT'S BEES

- Parnass raved about the natural Burt's tinted balm in Red Dahlia. "It is absolutely one of my favourite products in the world," she said. "It is just the perfect sheer red. I have given it to hundreds of friends and everybody who tries it loves it." To beef up the colour, use a liner underneath. But the best part of wearing it alone: "You don't even need a mirror to put it on. It is the easiest red lip colour of all time."



This kiss of colour and care retails for $7.

NARS LIP PENCILS

- Gibson also recommends these for lining and all-over colour in matte and gloss. As for the rest of the face when red is under consideration, all bets are off for hairstyle, Gibson said. No longer does red require a dramatic Hollywood updo. He does urge restraint for the eyes if a bold red is used on the lip. And there are no age restrictions for who wears red. "What's funny is you're seeing girls in their early 20s who are wearing lipstick. Girls are wearing a little more lip colour, a little more of a stain to the lip. You have to have a little bit more confidence to wear that," he said. "The girl who wears red is independent, very self-assertive and certain about who she is. And she's not afraid to show that."

Nars liners go for $22 to $24 and the pencils for $25.

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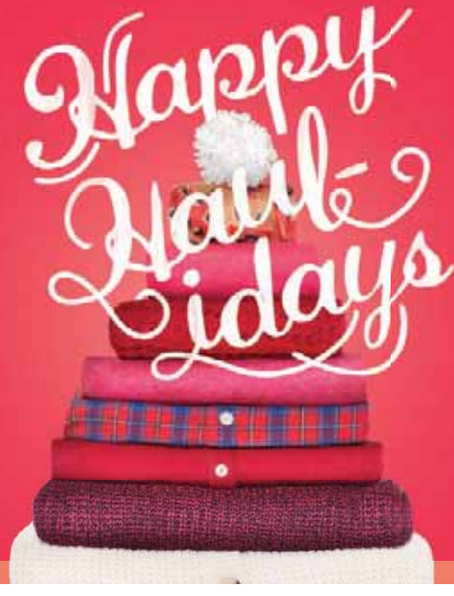

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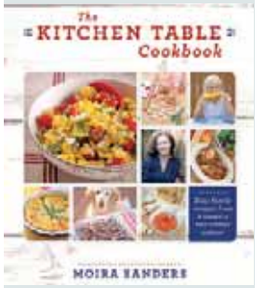
Fling away those frozen fish sticks

Cookbook of the Week

Family favourites



Sometimes you want to go back to basics. Enter The Kitchen Table Cookbook by Moira Sanders. The release offers recipes that have been tried, tweaked, sampled, savoured and passed on. It covers all the bases for feeding your family during all seasons. Among recipes are: Fresh Sesame Bread Sticks, Sunday Roast Beef Tenderloin, Seared Salmon, Stuffed Shells, Malted Milk Cookies and more. **METRO**

Perch-in-a-Basket with Tartar Sauce.

Bring an old pub favourite to your table

"I love everything about perch. Catching it, cooking it, eating it — what's not to love? I recently found out that a friend of mine ... even had it for her wedding dinner. I wish I had thought of that!" writes Moira Sanders in her book The Kitchen Table Cookbook.

1. Combine the flour, salt and pepper in a bowl. Whisk the eggs and milk together in a second bowl. Place the finely crushed saltines in a third bowl. Place the bowls in this order next to the stove where you will be cooking the fish.

2. Heat about 2 inches (5 cm) of oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Use a deep-fry thermometer if you have one — the ideal temperature is 375 F (190 C) — or check that the oil is ready by dropping a small piece of bread into the hot oil to see if it bubbles right away. Preheat the oven to 250 F (120 C).

3. Dredge each fillet in the flour mixture, egg mixture and finally in the crushed saltines. Carefully place 3 or 4 fillets in the hot oil. Turn the fillets once they have turned a dark golden on one side. When the pieces are done, remove from the oil and place on a baking sheet lined with paper towels.

4. Place the finished fish in the oven to keep warm and continue frying the rest of fillets. Serve hot with Tartar Sauce.

Tartar Sauce

1. Combine all of the ingredients in a medium bowl and mix thoroughly. Serve immediately or cover and refrigerate until needed.

RECIPE FROM THE KITCHEN TABLE COOKBOOK BY MOIRA SANDERS (WHITECAP, 2014)

Ingredients

Perch-in-a-Basket
- 1 1/2 cups (375 ml) all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) fine sea salt
- 1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) black pepper
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) milk
- 1 1/2 cups (375 ml) finely ground saltine crackers (about 1 1/2 sleeves of saltines)
- vegetable oil for frying
- 2 lb (1 kg) fresh yellow perch fillets (skin on is fine)

Tartar Sauce
- 1 cup (250 ml) mayonnaise

1/2 cup (125 ml) finely chopped dill pickle
1/4 cup (60 ml) chopped chives
1 tbsp (15 ml) fresh lemon juice
1 tsp (5 ml) Worcestershire sauce

This recipe serves four to six. FROM THE KITCHEN TABLE COOKBOOK

metro
BLACK FRIDAY
Thursday, November 27, 2014

Historically an American shopping holiday, Black Friday has grown in Canada the past few years. BERNARD WEIL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Forget Boxing Day, this is the real shopping day

Start your wallets. In the minds of Canadian Shoppers, Black Friday is second to none for best deals

A crowd of shoppers waits outside the Target store in Lisbon, Conn., ahead of Black Friday. SEAN D. ELLIOT/THE DAY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

VAWN HIMMELSBACH
For Metro

Is Black Friday the new Boxing Day? The shopping holiday from south of the border is, for the first time, winning over Canadians.

Thirty-three per cent of Canadian shoppers expect to find the best deals on Black Friday, while the same number expect to find the best deals on Boxing Day, according to Accenture's 2014 holiday shopping survey. This is a significant shift from last year when only 22 per cent of Canadians expected to find the best deals on Black Friday.

While Black Friday may have started out as a novelty, it "snuck up on us," said Kelly Askew, managing director of strategy with Accenture Inc., a global consulting company.

"We've been watching the importance of Black Friday climb year over year," he said. "This is the first year Black Friday is as important as Boxing Day in the minds of Canadians. If this trend continues we'll start to see less and less focus on Boxing Day."

The survey found that 61 per cent of Canadians plan to shop on Black Friday — a trend largely driven by younger shoppers (81 per cent of those aged 18 to 24 will hit the shops on Nov. 28).

There's also a move away from cross-border shopping, said Askew. This is, in part, due to the weakening loonie, which is making those U.S. deals a little less attractive. But it's also because Canadian retailers have started to take Black Friday more seriously.

"It's not just a couple of items on sale. (Retailers) are putting a big mark on their planning calendar," said Askew.

"It's kind of a perfect storm for Canadian retailers," he said. "They're seeing a heightened interest in Black Friday ... and Canadians say they're going to shop domestically."

And, on average, Canadians plan to spend $250 more than they did last year during the holiday season.

"They need to be ready for that crush," said Askew. "The last thing retailers want is to have people walking out the door or dropping off the website in frustration because they may not be able make the purchase," he said. After all, they can always come back on Boxing Day.

"The question is always: Is it going to be a better deal on Boxing Day when retailers don't have as many prospects of selling?" said Maureen Atkinson, senior partner at J.C. Williams Group, a retail consulting firm.

When Black Friday first came to Canada, she was sceptical. "Black Friday has a meaning in the U.S.," she said. "For Canadians it doesn't make as much sense because it isn't a holiday."

Black Friday follows American Thanksgiving, when most retailers in the U.S. offer promotional sales to kick off the holiday shopping season.

Many Americans have the day off (or take it off, since American Thanksgiving always falls on Thursday).

In 2008, several large Canadian retailers started offering Black Friday deals, mainly to discourage cross-border shopping.

But the shopping holiday finally appears to be catching on here — perhaps because retailers no longer have to wait until Dec. 26 to find out if they'll meet their annual revenue goals. If they have a stellar Black Friday, it takes the pressure off Boxing Day, said Askew.

Canadian shopping trends

- Canadian consumers like to pre-shop on their smartphone or tablet in preparation for Black Friday, said Jennifer Lee, senior retail leader with Deloitte Canada.
- About 38 per cent of Canadians plan to pre-shop before Black Friday, according to Deloitte's 2014 Holiday Retail Outlook.

GTA guide: Where to go, what to do and how to get there

Mall rats. The ins and outs of the Black Friday shopping frenzy

JACLYN TERSIGNI
For Metro

Black Friday shopping is a battle. If you're planning to wage, be prepared.

Here's what you need to know about five of the GTA's biggest shopping destinations.

Be prepared for shoulder-to-shoulder throngs at the Eaton Centre. SHUTTERSTOCK

YORKDALE MALL

Location: 3401 Dufferin St., Toronto
Contact: 416-789-3261; yorkdale.com
Black Friday hours: 7 a.m. to 9:30 p.m
Black Friday promotions: The first 100 shoppers will receive a $50 Yorkdale gift card. Those in-it-to-win-it will be allowed to start lining up (near the Dufferin Road entrance) at 5 a.m. to receive a qualifying wristband.
Number of stores: About 247 (including food and snacks)
What to eat: Options for all tastes. Head to the mall's Dine on 3 food court for fancy burgers and burritos or take a break at one of the sit-down restaurants, like Milestone's and Joey.
Tips: Consider taking advantage of the mall's valet parking service. For $15, a driver will find a parking spot for you and bring your vehicle back when you've finished shopping. The service starts at 7 a.m.

VAUGHAN MILLS

Location: 1 Bass Pro Mills Dr., Vaughan
Contact: 905-879-2110; vaughanmills.com
Black Friday hours: 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Black Friday promotions: The first 200 customers to visit the guest services kiosk (located between entrances four and five) receive a $10 mall gift card. Shoppers can also enter to win a $25,000 shopping spree. Look for the keyword displayed at the guests services kiosk and text it to 393939.
Number of stores: About 255 (including food and snacks)
What to eat: Options are limited but good food can be found very close by. Try Marcello's Pizzeria, a less-than-five minute walk away.
Tips: Vaughan Mills is only one floor; think of it as a racetrack. Take a look at the mall's map before you go to get a sense of what stores are where and plan your visit accordingly.

TORONTO EATON CENTRE

Location: 220 Yonge St., Toronto
Contact: 416-598-8560, torontoeatoncentre.com
Black Friday hours: 6 a.m. to 9:30 p.m
Black Friday promotions: "Fashion spotters" will be on the hunt for the most stylish shoppers and rewarding them with SHOP! gift cards, good for use at retailers within any Cadillac Fairview shopping centre.
Number of stores: About 216 (including food and snacks)
What to eat: As far as food courts go, the Eaton Centre's Urban Eatery is first-class. Finding fuel for all palates won't be a problem — the court boasts close to 25 options, including Urban Herbivore, a small Toronto chain with vegan salads and rice bowls for nutritious fuel.
Tips: As the epicentre of shopping in the downtown core, the Eaton Centre attracts massive crowds. Be prepared for shoulder-to-shoulder throngs and patience-testing lineups. Stow your jackets at home or in a bag; you're going to get hot.

TORONTO PREMIUM OUTLETS

Location: 13850 Steeles Ave. West, Halton Hills
Contact: 647-497-8270; torontopremiumoutlets.com
Black Friday hours: 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.
Black Friday promotions: By store only
Number of stores: Close to 100 (including food and snacks)
What to eat: Sandwiches and sushi, but not too much else. Pack snacks.
Tips: Contrary to its name, this outlet centre is about an hour and 15 minutes from Toronto. If you're driving, be prepared for heavy traffic along the 401. If you don't need to be there by 6 a.m. and want to relax en route, you can take a GO bus from Union Station to the Milton GO station. From there, the outlets are about a 12-minute taxi trip away.

Don't let shopping knock you off your feet. SHUTTERSTOCK

Surviving Black Friday

Black Friday. The day after U.S. Thanksgiving, it marks the beginning of the Christmas shopping season and yields promotional sales of unheralded savings.

Over the years, Black Friday has seen its share of sore thumbs unable to play nicely but all-in-all, the combination of holiday cheer, specials and take-home goodies brings smiles to even the biggest grinches. It's no wonder retailers are literally bombarded with shoppers fighting — figuratively and occasionally literally — to spend. Here's a few simple strategies in getting ahead and getting home with both wallet and sanity intact.

Strategize
It may seem obvious but as body-crushing crowds at past Black Friday events have proven, it pays to plan ahead. Look through flyers. Go in early and find out where items are located in the store. Pick a few "essentials" and make straight for them as opposed to overextending, risking getting lost either in-store or amongst the sea of others looking for their own deals. If you're going to make the most of Black Friday, this is a mission; a stakeout, not a simple hunt-and-peck for a good deal.

Pack light
This foray is equal parts sprint and marathon. While the inclination might be to prepare for a cold wait outside of stores in order to secure a jockeying position, one runs the risk of being bogged-down by non-essentials. Is that second tablet really necessary? It might take up vital space or, worse yet, slow one down when scurrying through the isles hunting down that incredibly smart television deal.

Get help
Bring a second — or third — set of hands. If carrying everything but the kitchen sink is vital to maintaining happiness before the go moment, have other bodies manage junk. Bring non-shoppers along to courier the camping setup back to the car and hightail it into the store to steer carts, carry purchases, et cetera.

KEITH CARMAN/FOR METRO

URBAN PLANET

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★ iPhone 6 ★

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★ Samsung Galaxy S5 ★

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VAUGHAN	MISSISSAUGA	BRAMPTON	WILLOWDALE	SCARBOROUGH	THORNHILL	MISSISSAUGA	OAKVILLE	BRAMPTON	TORONTO

One of each prize listed to be given away at each location above on Friday, November 28th 2014 only. No purchase necessary to win.
Prize draws will be made by ballot entry at 10AM, 2PM & 6PM, with one prize awarded during each draw. 3 prizes total to be won at each location.

Game-day strategy: Beware the hype

Black Friday vs. Cyber Monday. Deal-savvy mom says online is best — if you plan ahead

JACLYN TERSIGNI
For Metro

Lena Almeida is a self-labelled "reformed spend-aholic."

The lifestyle blogger — whose blog Listen to Lena has been the most-trafficked personal blog in Toronto since 2010 — shopped hard as a career woman with a matching salary in her 20s, but motherhood turned her into a more savvy shopper.

"I wasn't exactly the saving type. I always had to have the latest trends. I've got years and years of retail experience," Almeida said, laughing. "When I became a parent, I had to learn how to shop smarter."

When it comes to Black Friday or Cyber Monday shopping, Almeida believes going online is the better choice — most of the time.

"Nine out of 10 times, I always recommend online shopping," she says. "You're shopping from the comfort of your own home, which translates to more shopping. You're not going out and braving the crowds and going from store to store … I think the better deals can be found online and with so many retailers now offering online shopping, it's forced everyone to become more competitive."

It also makes comparison-shopping as easy as navigating between a few different tabs on your browser. And increased competition between retailers in the online marketplace over the last few years has forced shipping costs to come down (almost all sites offer free shipping after a certain minimum), with guarantees and warranty policies improving, too. On Cyber Monday, many retailers do away with shipping costs and purchase minimums all together.

But that doesn't mean Cyber Monday always comes out on top of Black Friday. Some items are better off hunting for in stores.

Makeup, bath and body products, shoes, and clothing from retailers whose sizing you're unfamiliar with should be purchased in-person, Almeida said.

"If you're going to have to go back anyways to return it, you actually haven't saved that much time," she said. "The last thing you want to do is turn a purchase into something you have to deal with."

Whether shopping online or in stores, the rules for successfully navigating the sales are the same. Rule number one? Beware the hype.

"When it comes to Black Friday and Cyber Monday shopping, it's really, really easy to get caught up in the hype," Almeida said.

That hype may be most dangerous when it comes to electronics, which are often the biggest draws on Black Friday and Cyber Monday. Before you venture out — to the mall or via your laptop — know exactly which television, stereo system, or computer package you're after.

"It's easy to get lured into a great deal on a large-screen TV but you may find out after that it's last year's model, that it's been discontinued, that there are warranty issues," Almeida warned. "When buying electronics, research ahead of time to find out what you're looking for and try not to get caught up in the door-crasher items — unless it's an item you've already had your eye on and have pre-vetted."

Game-day strategies

Before you hit the mall or the web, take heed of Almeida's tips for maximizing your time and money on Black Friday and Cyber Monday.

Know the regular prices

"If you don't know what a product consistently sells for, it's very easy to be looped into the false belief that you are being offered a huge savings," Almeida said. "Always know going in what you're looking for, what it normally retails for, and then decide if what is presented to you is a good deal or not."

Budget for extras

"Give yourself a miscellaneous budget for those 'It's a fantastic deal, I'm just going to buy it' items so you don't feel guilty at the end for putting those in your cart. That budget can be $50 or $500, but make an agreement with yourself ahead of time."

Lena Almeida prefers online shopping for deals, but says in some cases, stores are necessary. TIM FRASER/FOR METRO

BLACK FRIDAY BLOWOUT!

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On home turf. Canuck uproots U.S. retail habits

For years, Debby Blyth has been drawn to the online deals available through U.S. retailers on Black Friday.

"They do slash the prices incredibly," she said. "I've bought evening gowns for a fancy dress ball I go to, as well as boots and shoes, bags, and shirts for my husband."

But more recently, Blyth has gravitated to Canadian online shopping sites, which are offering Black Friday deals of their own.

"Last year, I bought my husband a weather station at Canadian Tire," she said. "He's obsessed with the weather and it was only $19 on Black Friday, compared to the regular price of $75." The device combines an outdoor sensor with an LED readout that stays inside the house and tells the time, the barometric pressure, and the temperature indoors and outdoors.

Blyth also purchased a Soda Stream machine at Canadian Tire for $64, about a third off the usual price.

Although Blyth is a proud Canadian, she admits her reasons for cyber-shopping on her own side of the border have more to do with saving money than patriotism.

She can attest to the fact that additional costs for exchange rates, shipping, duty, and other fees can sometimes conspire to turn U.S. deals into duds.

"A few years ago, I picked out a few things to buy at Macy's and then I got browsing," she said. She ended up adding a couple of impulse purchases to her basket of goods — including a blouse and a bag for her daughter. "When it came time to pay the duty it cost me an extra $30," she recalled. "I realized that I had basically killed the deal."

As it turns out, Blyth's impulse purchases were manufactured outside of North America, making them subject to a higher level of duty under NAFTA rules.

Now, she said, "I compare all of the costs to see where I can get the best value."

CAMILLA CORNELL/FOR METRO

Debby Blyth is a strategic Black Friday shopper. "It's not impulse shopping … I'll buy Christmas presents on Black Friday because I know I can get $10 or $20 off on things that I'm going to buy anyway." AARON HARRIS/FOR METRO

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Woodside Square
East York Town Centre
Woodbine Centre

Downtown Toronto
104 Dundas St. E.
542 Yonge St
588 Parliament St
672 Gerrard St E
222 Spadina Ave., Unit 3B
1484 Queen St W

Uptown Toronto
1818 Eglinton Ave W, Unit 2
2032 Weston Rd
1267 St. Clair Ave W
East York
642 Danforth Ave.
2129 Danforth Ave
2995 Danforth Ave.
747 Don Mills Rd., Unit 22B
1004 Pape Ave.
1094 Victoria Park Ave.

Etobicoke
2456 Lakeshore Blvd W
30A Rexdale Blvd
1062 Albion Rd, Unit A
1379 Lawrence Ave W

Scarborough
5901 Steeles Ave E, Unit 100
1911 Kennedy Rd
2667 Eglinton Ave E, Unit 1
4352 Kingston Rd, Unit 7B
900 Progress Ave
Kingspoint Plaza
252 Queen St E
Shoppers World

Mississauga
Westwood Mall
High Point Mall
Mississauga Market Place
2550 Hurontario St
7070 Saint Barbara Blvd, Unit 22
20 Dundas St. E., Unit 1

Brampton
Shoppers World
Kennedy Square Mall
252 Queen St E
499 Ray Lawson Blvd

Know the rules of state-side shopping

Before heading over the border, get familiar with your alcohol and tobacco limits, determined by your length of stay. DANIEL HAYDUK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Paying duty. How much can you claim?

ASTRID VAN DEN BROEK
For Metro

When it comes to crossing the border to shop, it's a smart idea to have your duty and exemptions information straight so you know what you can bring back.

The tax exemptions

According to the Canada Border Services Agency, if you are away 24 hours or longer, you can claim up to $200 in goods without paying any duty, however, you can't claim alcohol or tobacco products. If you are over for more than 48 hours, you can claim up to $800 of goods, including alcohol and tobacco.

To lie or not to lie?

Generally, most shoppers say it's best to fess up your shopping expenses because the consequences can be dire.

"If they catch you lying, they flag you and then they pull you in every single time and you could lose your expedited NEXUS border clearance pass if you have one," said Karen Pietrangelo, a shopper from Niagara Falls, Ont. "The money that you save is often still more than what you would have spent originally in Canada if you're shopping smart. If I'm getting a $70 golf shirt for $10 and I have to pay $5 on duty, I'm still ahead."

BLACK FRIDAY EVENT—Starts today 10am!

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LAST CHANCE THIS YEAR! SAVE BIG TODAY

Studio Sofa Bed
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SALE ENDS DEC.1
www.downunderbeding.com

Seasoned cross-border shoppers say it's worth the visit for Black Friday deals if you are going after big-ticket items. TED S. WARREN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cross-border shopping. What's worth going for?

Are Black Friday deals worth the wait and the craziness that you see on TV reports? We talked to some regular shoppers to find out what deals are over the border.

Go big or go home

"The big-ticket items are definitely worth it, so electronics and furniture, appliances those sorts of things," said Denise Salamat-O'Connell from Oakville, who crosses the border to shop three to four times a year — including around Black Friday. "Obviously, you're going to get minimal savings on things like clothes, but really to make it worth your while to go over there, you've got to bring back some big-ticket items."

This includes home improvement items.

"I once bought a Grohe faucet for $500 at a Lowe's in the U.S.," said Taralyn Goodall, who is based in Winnipeg. "At our Lowe's? It was $900 — seriously."

Shop for clothes at home

Georgia Kantriviotis, from Toronto, visits Buffalo about three times a year to do some shopping. "Clothes shopping used to be worth it but now I just shop for clothes in Canada and pay a little more because the deals aren't as they used to be," she said.

Deal finder

- **Know your prices.** "Browse through U.S. flyers before you go over the border, that way you can compare with Canadian sales and really see if it's worth it," Kantriviotis said.
- **Get Googling.** "Search the Internet for coupons before you go over because there are always coupons available," Kantriviotis said.

Shop for alcohol only ...

If you stay more than 48 hours. "Because then it's so much cheaper over there and totally worth it," Kantriviotis said. Salamat-O'Connell agrees. After seeing her husband try to bring back a few bottles of alcohol while visiting for a day to shop in the States. "If you're just going over for 24 hours there's no liquor exemption so you will be charged duties and taxes," she said. "And for him, it brought it up to more than what you'd get it for at the LCBO."

How about groceries?

It may be worth it to do your grocery shopping. "I often buy groceries over there," Goodall said.

ASTRID VAN DEN BROEK/FOR METRO

Bargain hunters shop for discounted merchandise at Macy's on Black Friday in 2011 in New York City. GETTY IMAGES

Afraid of being trampled?

RICK MCGINNIS
For Metro

Maybe it's the name, but Black Friday has acquired a sinister reputation that seems undeserved for an annual shopping event focused on getting a really great deal on a TV, a video game console or a life-sized doll.

It's a reputation that Boxing Day, its monster sale big brother, has never been tainted with, even though that week-long post-Christmas shopping gauntlet — Canada's homegrown contribution to retail frenzy — remains a bigger event. The stories began to emerged almost 10 years ago, starting with a Walmart in Columbus, Ohio, where nine shoppers were injured as a crowd surged into the store to grab gift certificates dropped from the ceiling. Every year, they were reported: The salesperson who was trampled to death in 2008 when a crowd outside an upstate New York Walmart broke down the doors; a woman at a California Walmart in 2011 who pepper-sprayed fellow customers lined up to buy an Xbox.

The good news is, for a variety of reasons, this sort of thing almost never happens north of the border. Prime among them: Black Friday doesn't happen in Canada during a statutory holiday. American Thanksgiving is the customary prelude to Black Friday in the U.S., so lineups will begin hours or even days in advance.

Online shopping, inventory checks in other stores and ordering items for shipment also help big-box retailers manage customer expectations.

Deal hunting? Make it a road trip with friends

The deals, the selection and the experience: All three may drive Canadians to shop in the U.S. on, or close to, Black Friday.

Sales tax differences won't likely shift shopper from one state to another.

Some Canadians favour Pennsylvania, with its statewide six per cent sales tax, compared to New York's sales tax of up to 8.75 per cent. But many New York communities forego their share of the sales tax on clothing items valued at less than $110 US, pushing the tax rate down to four per cent.

Distance is likely a factor. Erie, Pa., is 3.5 hours from Toronto, while Buffalo is a two-hour drive. Gasoline prices? Fuel sells in Irving, N.Y., for about 30 cents per litre less than in Toronto.

You could let someone else drive. Adrian Bowen, of blackfridaytrip.com, will send three 55-passenger buses to Buffalo from Toronto for Black Friday. He says the 16-hour excursion is all about the bargains.

"Even though in Canada they're trying to have their own Black Friday shopping, it cannot be compared to what we actually see in the States."

He said, as an example, that a Michael Kors handbag in Toronto can cost $300, but in Buffalo-area stores "you can get that bag for $150 US."

Bowen says the bus trips, by "hard-core shoppers" with an average age of 25 years and one goal in sight, are, "an extremely social experience."

Stephen Fine, who runs the shopping website, crossborder-shopping.ca, said, "I find that there's a lot to offer in Buffalo." Fine said that for shoppers responding to his website, the No. 1 reason for shopping is cost savings, which can range from 30 per cent to 50 per cent. The second reason is the wider selection of merchandise. The third reason: It's an inexpensive and fun holiday.

R. Jacqueline D'Souza, a former Torontonian who now spends much of her time in New York with her real estate company, used to be a committed cross-border shopper, "but these days I find the long lines to get across the border, as well as the lengthy lines at stores, to be quite a turnoff."

Having said that, she said the Buffalo discount outlets offer year-round "discount clothing for children which is great for parents." BILL BEAN/FOR METRO

Consider Niagara Falls, N.Y., as a shopping destination — and make a weekend out of it. GETTY IMAGES

DOWN UNDER

BLACK FRIDAY BLOWOUT

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SALE STARTS THURSDAY AT 10AM & ENDS DEC.1ST

Shoppers, snatch up these great gifts

Get the scoop.
Here are some sale items to cross off your list

JACLYN TERSIGNI
For Metro

Music and food make the world go round. Have a home gourmet and amateur audiophile on your gift-giving list this holiday? Consider shopping for these ideas on Black Friday.

Monogram Cheeseboard
A perfect hostess gift, this monogrammed cheeseboard comes with a spreader and its own resting spot.
$19.50; Indigo.

Saveur: The New Classics Cookbook
More than 1,000 of the world's best recipes for today's kitchen by the editors of Saveur Magazine. A diverse curation of the best recipes from Saveur culinary magazine, covering every type of cuisine.
$45; Indigo.

KitchenAid Professional 5™ Plus Series Stand Mixer
Ten speeds and a five-quart bowl take (almost) all the work out of kneading doughs and batters.
$599.99; Canadian Tire.

THE GOURMET

Keurig 2.0 K300 Coffee Brewing System with carafe
Brew one cup or four, plus go for bold with the system's strong setting.
$129.99; Canadian Tire.

The Oh She Glows Cookbook: Vegan Recipes To Glow From The Inside Out by Angela Liddon
Recipes to satisfy even the most ardent anti-vegans, from self-trained Canadian chef, food photographer and blogger.
$29; Indigo.

T-fal ActiFry Healthy Fryer
For the health-conscious french fry lover, the ActiFry requires only one tablespoon of oil for fries, chicken wings and other fried goodies.
$189.98; Amazon.ca.

THE MUSIC LOVER

Leonard Cohen Everybody Knows by Harvey Kubernik
Even casual Cohen fans will be roused by this exploration of the legendary Canadian poet, singer-songwriter and author.
$35; Indigo.

iHome iD48 Portable Rechargeable Stereo System for iPad/iPhone/iPod
You don't have to choose between charging your device and letting the music blast with this dual-purpose stereo.
$99; Indigo.

Frends with Benefits Taylor Headphones in Rose Gold
Beautiful to look at and listen to. A three-button mic adds volume, music, and phone controls.
$199; Indigo.

Casio LK-240 61-Key Portable Touch Sensitive Personal Keyboard with AHL Technology
For the independent learner, this keyboard's built-in education system breaks lessons down into small, step-by-step units.
$219.99; Amazon.ca.

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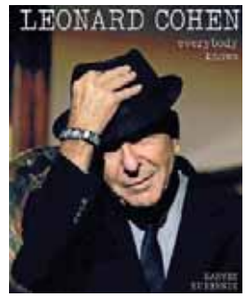

Sennheiser HD598 Headphones
For those serious about sound, these high-performance headphones deliver impeccable sound quality through luxe velour ear pads.
$252.83; Amazon.ca.

Clockwise from bottom left, KitchenAid Professional 5™ Plus Series Stand Mixer; Monogram Cheeseboard; Sennheiser HD598 Headphones; Leonard Cohen Everybody Knows; Casio LK-240 61-Key Portable Touch Sensitive Personal Keyboard, and T-fal ActiFry Healthy Fryer.

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Looking for deals? Yes, there's an app for that

For Americans, Black Friday is the busiest shopping day of the year. For Canadians, it's an opportunity to save serious cash, as retailers north of the border jump on the Black Friday bandwagon. Each year, Black Friday grows in popularity among Canadian retailers. Here are some useful apps to cash in on savings.

Flipp
Free on iOS, Android
A simple way to browse through deals not only on Black Friday, but every day of the year. Flipp gathers flyers from stores in your area and displays them on your smartphone or tablet. You can search for particular products to see if they are on sale, or browse through deals at your favourite store. If you find something of interest, the app lets you clip out the ad with virtual scissors and saves it to your phone.

RedFlagDeals
Free on iOS, Android
What began as a popular deal-finding website has now turned into a fantastic money-saving app. Deals are automatically mapped out for you on your smartphone based on your location. You can also browse through flyers from your favourite store so you can make a plan of attack before heading out on Black Friday. What really sets this app apart is the discussion board where users post and share deals with other users.

RedFlagDeals

Amazon
Free on iOS, Android and Windows Phone
Don't want to venture out into the cold? Sometimes it's easier to shop right from your smartphone or tablet. Amazon's user-friendly interface makes it simple to track down deals. Search for items by keyword, or scan a barcode on a product and Amazon will track it down in its database for you to purchase.

Sale Saver Shopping Calculator
$1.99 on iOS
Know exactly how much you will pay for something before you head to the till. Type in the price of your item, the percentage it is marked down, then sit back as the app calculates the sales tax so you know the final tally. Works in Canadian, U.S., and other currencies. A free version is also available, but you will have to deal with pop-up ads and restricted features.

Point Inside Shopping and Travel
Free on iOS, Android
If want to cash in on the best Black Friday deals, you will need a game plan. This app offers maps of most major malls across Canada and the U.S., showing you where individual stores are located. You can also search for the nearest washroom, ATM or restaurant when you need a break.

MIKE YAWNEY/FOR METRO

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Shopper Sandra Keeley recommends looking online for deals on electronics, toys and books and kids' clothing. TIM FRASER/FOR METRO

Best deals? Home turf is where the shopping is

North of the border.
Canadian consumers are staying put this year

TANYA ENBERG
For Metro

Canadian shoppers will be sticking closer to home this holiday season instead of crossing the border in search of better deals.

Less than a quarter of Canadians are planning to cross-border shop, down from 60 per cent last year, an Accenture survey found.

Claire Keeley, 43, of Dundas, Ont. is among those shopping locally this year and taking advantage of Canada's Black Friday and Cyber Monday discounts.

"In the past, I was drawn to U.S. shopping because the stores I wanted to shop at were not available in Canada and they had good online coupons and deals," said Keeley, a freelance corporate event producer. "I do most of my shopping locally now, partly because the duty and shipping costs, and return and exchange costs can be high depending on what you order from the U.S. Also, quite a few of my favourite U.S. stores have opened locations in Canada."

Diane Brisebois, president and CEO of the Retail Council of Canada, says several factors are likely playing into consumers' decision to remain on home turf, among them the weak Canadian dollar and the promise of receiving the best savings during Black Friday through Cyber Monday events.

"We have more and more retailers in Canada with really good transactional websites versus three to five years ago, so if I am a consumer, I have the best of both worlds; I can cross the border if I am not satisfied or I am looking for something else or I perceive it would be a better deal, but at the same time I have more choice, more assortment, and more competition in the Canadian market for my business.

Meanwhile, Keeley's sister-in-law, Sandra Keeley, 42, of Toronto, who has taken advantage of cross-border savings previously — primarily buying work wear, shoes and clothing for her children — said there no longer is a strong incentive to travel south for better pricing.

"The Canadian dollar recently has had a bit of a slump so it doesn't make it as compelling for sure," Sandra admits.

Instead of fighting crowds, Sandra is taking a different approach to her 2014 holiday gift list — she intends to do most of her purchasing online.

"I really don't like going to the malls and it comes right to the door," she said. "I think shopping is sort of borderless now," she said.

And what will Sandra being shopping for online? "I find the best on-line deals in Canada are on electronics, toys and books and kids' clothing."

Shopping list

What Canadians plan to purchase:

- Topping the shopping charts among consumers is apparel **(57 per cent)**, gift cards **(52 per cent)**, toys **(39 per cent)** and grocery items **(38 per cent)**.
- **23 per cent** plan to purchase a video game console or video game; **16 per cent** plan to buy a laptop or home computer; **15 per cent** will purchase a tablet; and **12 per cent** plan to buy either a mobile phone or smartphone.
- **Source:** Accenture holiday shopping survey, 2014.

Deep discounts help keep holiday shoppers at home

Retailers hope 2014 discounts will be deep enough to convince Canadians to shop at home. With slashed prices and bargain-bin deals, the infiltration of Black Friday into the Canadian market from the U.S. is now a multi-billion dollar business.

The Retail Council of Canada (RCC) hopes the 2014 discounts will be deep enough to convince Canadian consumers to shop at home for the holidays rather than travelling south of the border.

"About three years ago, we noticed Canadian retailers or retailers based in Canada — be they domestic or international — become more aggressive in keeping consumers from crossing the border, to keep our sales dollars and tax dollars in Canada," says Diane Brisebois, president and CEO of the Retail Council of Canada.

"[Black Friday] started becoming part of the Canadian fabric."

But as Black Friday continues to gain traction here, according to Brisebois, it's unlikely to ever reach the fever-pitched shopping frenzy seen in the U.S.

The Eaton Centre is one of the top holiday shopping destinations in the city. SHUTTERSTOCK

"We don't expect to see those crowds of people literally shoving each other out of the way to grab something out of the sale basket," she says.

"There isn't the same frenzy here as there is in the U.S., and it's not because the sales are not as good, but because it's also not very Canadian."

In part, the adoption of Black Friday among larger retailers and smaller mom-and-pop shops alike was born out of necessity. The event is a way of trying to stay competitive and encourage shoppers to support Canadian retailers.

However, Brisebois does concede it is unrealistic to expect Canadian-based stores to be able to offer the same savings found in the U.S.

"It's because of scale," she explains. "It's as simple as that. Even a big electronic chain that's a North American chain with operations in Canada still can't get the prices in Canada as its mother ship gets in the U.S … I am buying one and my counterpart in the U.S. is buying 10."

While the RCC is unable to predict the number of businesses participating in Black Friday promotions, it is confident the spending will amount to billions for Canadian businesses.

"We are looking at the numbers, we're looking at the dollar, we're looking at the promotions coming and we think consumers this year will get some of the best deals they've ever had in the Canadian market in retail," Brisebois says.

TANYA ENBERG/FOR METRO

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Selection may vary by store.

Protect against fraud this season

Be aware. Take steps to mitigate risk for smooth shopping

ASTRID VAN DEN BROEK
For Metro

Protect your pin with your hand and your body position. SHUTTERSTOCK

Avoid online threats

- **Do** stick to secure, private Internet connections when shopping, said the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada. Avoid unsecured wireless Internet sites.
- **Don't** open every email you receive — particularly from unknown addresses. You could accidentally download a virus, spyware or malware. These can track your keystrokes and, ultimately, help criminals determine your passwords or online banking information.

It's been a year where data breaches have turned up repeatedly in headlines — major retailers such as Home Depot, SuperValu and Target have all investigated customer data hacks recently. So how safe are we to shop with our debit or credit cards, especially during this particularly busy shopping season?

Risk does rise

The risk of fraud around your cards is twofold, said Stephen O'Keefe, vice-president, operations for the Retail Council of Canada.

"There's an increased risk of fraud because the bad guys, so to speak, are hiding behind the sheer volume of people. It feels safer for them to commit the offence in a crowd where they can be somewhat faceless and nameless," O'Keefe said. "And in stores, cashiers are also busier, so their sensitivity to fraud on a regular day may actually go down just because of the stress and tension of the crowd in front of them. Those two factors combined are a nasty combination."

And in an age where we are constantly advancing our technology against fraud and data breaches, O'Keefe said the cashier is still one of the best ways to prevent fraud.

"The gut feeling that a cashier has that something is fishy can lead to major breaks in cases. As a matter of fact, there was a huge breach in the U.S. at one time where fraudulent transactions were happening in a competing retailer. And, ultimately, the retailer determined there was a fraudulent card based on a tip from a cashier who had a gut feeling something was going on. That gut feeling is critical. The breaks in the cases are often from cashiers — and then the system goes back and traces where the breaches took place."

How to protect yourself in-store

While often there is a tiny shield over the pin pad that is, more often than not, barely shielding anything from fellow customers in line, O'Keefe does have some tips to share to prevent getting your card breached.

Be friendly in line

If someone is acting suspicious in line behind you, engage them in conversation or look right at them so you can remember them if something happens. "Criminals don't like friendly people," O'Keefe said.

Further protect your pin

And engage in some finger play when you are keying in your pin number for your credit or debit card. "There are thermal indicators on cellphones and you can take pictures of keypads to determine the heat," O'Keefe said. "So you can lay your fingers over a lot of different keys or when they're keying in four numbers, don't make deliberate motions. Hit '1' and then move your fingers around the numbers so it'll confuse people."

Block with your body

"Always assume there's someone standing behind you and be sure to conceal your fingers when keying in numbers," O'Keefe said. Better yet, stand in between the following customer and the keypad so you block the pad with your body as extra protection.

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FAMILY FUN GUIDE

BY ASTRID VAN DEN BROEK

Where to go, what to do and how to get there. Here are this week's activity listings

CELEBRATE RBC SPORTS DAY

Saturday, Nov. 29 is RBC Sports Day in Canada, a national celebration of sport in communities from coast to coast, presented in partnership with ParticipACTION, CBC and True Sport. Several events will be taking place in the Greater Toronto region including the following:

• Free skating at Harbourfront Centre from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., with National Sledge Hockey Team member and RBC Olympian Kevin Rempel.

• The live broadcast event for RBC Sports Day in Canada will take place at the Whitby Abilities Centre from noon to 6 p.m. Festivities include wheelchair basketball, try-it events and a variety of family activities, including meet-and-greets with Canadian gold medal curler Brad Jacobs, as well as RBC Olympians Adam Lancia, Jason Burnett and Greg Westlake. Learn more at **sportsday.cbc.ca.**

CHRISTMAS MARKET AT THE DISTILLERY

Back for its fifth year, the market features lots of stalls, an Elves Sing-Along and a life-sized gingerbread house. Enjoy a mug hot chocolate — or better yet, some mulled wine or hot rum. Nov. 28-Dec. 21 at the Distillery Historic District. For more, visit torontochristmasmarket.com.

LIGHT FANTASTIC

Take in the 48th annual Cavalcade of Lights and watch the lighting of the official Christmas Tree of Toronto. Stay for live musical performances, fireworks, and a dance party or DJ'd skating party in the square's ice rink. Nov. 29, 7 p.m., Nathan Phillips Square. Learn more at Toronto.ca.

CHECK OUT THE OCTONAUTS

Meet and greet children's favourite TV characters the Octonauts. The Frozen Ice Queen & Princess and Peter Pan and friends will also be there. Enjoy stage performances and get a family photo in the giant snow globe. KidzFest, Yonge-Dundas Square, Nov. 29, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Go to wintermagic.ca for more.

GINGERBREAD HOUSE WORKSHOP

Make a dream gingerbread house with your family at the historical Montgomery's Inn in the west end (Islington and Dundas St. W.). $30 per house, all supplies provided. Nov. 29 and 30. Pre-register at montgomerysinn.com.

"Someday I'd like to play on Team Canada." *– Madison, age 8*

Every kid has a someday. It may be something fantastical like flying to the moon, something practical like following their dad into construction or something we all can relate to like wanting to be surrounded by love. No matter what it is, we want to give them the support they need to get there. That's why we're pledging $100 million over five years to help over a million children do just that. Let's make every kid's someday™ happen.

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Legal Matters

Title problems stall refinance

We purchased our home in 2004 and have recently decided to add a line of credit to the title to allow us to renovate the kitchen. We are doing this through our bank.

When our bank looked at the title to the property, there was a 'document general' registered against title which designated the property as a matrimonial home dated from 1989. The bank will not proceed with the refinancing until we get this removed from title. What should we do?

LEGAL MATTERS
Jeffrey Cowan
home@metronews.ca

You should contact the lawyer who assisted you with the purchase of your home. This is a designation that should have been removed when you purchased the property and they should follow up on having this removed from title. At some time in the past, a law firm had registered the matrimonial home on title to protect a spouse's rights to the home. Typically this is done when there is a dispute between the parties and this will avoid one spouse who owns the property from selling the house and not providing the fair share of the proceeds to the spouse who may be non-resident and not knowledgeable to what was happening with the home.

This does not prove ownership to the property but should be cleaned up because it is a blemish on the title and should have been discharged when you bought the home. Your lawyer at the time should be responsible for looking after this for you.

Follow Jeff Cowan on Twitter @Cowan_Law or on the website cowanlaw.ca, or email him at jeff@cowanlaw.ca.

Take great lanes to do something new

Innovation. Underutilized city spaces are focus of Laneway Project initiative

CONDO TRENDS
Duncan McAllister
life@metronews.ca

Toronto has more than 2,400 publicly owned laneways that are often underused, deteriorating, and viewed as unsafe. That's the message from a new, not-for-profit called The Laneway Project, an innovative initiative that aims to fundamentally change the city's relationship with its laneways.

The group recently hosted Toronto's first laneway summit entitled Engaging In-Between Spaces.

It was an opportunity for urban planners, designers and community members to discuss the possibilities inherent in these underutilized spaces. The concept of connectivity envisions inner-urban corridors of interconnected ravines, trails and laneways providing spaces that can be used for public artwork, play space, and protected thoroughfares for pedestrians and cyclists.

Gianpiero Pugliese is the principal of Audax Architecture, the firm that designed Lanehouse on Bartlett in Toronto's Bloordale neighbourhood. Morphed from an antiquated yarn factory, this smart row of urban towns is situated along a cobblestoned laneway behind a row of low-rise housing.

Lanehouse on Bartlett in Toronto's Bloordale neighbourhood morphed from an old yarn factory. CONTRIBUTED

Animating back lanes

Many projects back onto lanes and developers are looking to animate those spaces.

- **Toronto artist and entrepreneur Gary Silverberg is the visionary behind the ART condominiums, an 11-storey, terraced mid-rise located in the heart of the Queen West arts community. In an effort to make all four sides of the building significant, the rear loading dock doubles as an event space.**
- **"The idea for the back of the building is it's a lane which we didn't want to be a lane." says Silverberg. "We wanted it to be a pedestrian and transportation route people felt very comfortable walking down. Something like what happens in Europe after years of intensification."**

Lanehouse on Bartlett

"It's very romantic in many ways, you walk down the laneway into this old industrial building that's been converted."

Gianpiero Pugliese, Audax Architecture

"It's very romantic in many ways: You walk down the laneway into this old industrial building that's been converted," says Pugliese.

According to the experts, not all laneways are the same.

"What makes that project possible is the configuration of the properties," says Pugliese. The site is contiguous with one of the residential lots which fronts onto Bartlett, providing all-important street access. "The challenge that most laneway projects have is that they don't often have that link."

From a residential developer's perspective, there are myriad challenges to providing services and access to a lane building. Water, hydro, ambulance and fire fighting all have to be taken into consideration.

At the same time, as land becomes more scarce in the GTA, reimagining Toronto's laneways may contribute to the future of affordable urban living.

"There is so much development pressure, so it's worth the extra effort to go through these processes," says Pugliese.

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Set the scene for entertaining

It's going to be a busy month of cocktail parties, dinners and gift exchanges, so you may as well do it with style. Here are some home-entertaining essentials to help get you through the holiday season

DESIGN CENTRE
Karl Lohnes
home@metronews.ca

Go on — fly your neat-freak flag

Put an end to that pile of black coats being thrown on the bed. Dark Wood Suit Hangers, 60-pack, $75, Walmart.com.

Nothing but the wild, wild best for your guests

Add some festive Cartier-chic to the powder room with the look of linen. Wild Christmas 16-count Paper Guest Towels, $9, BedBathAndBeyond.ca.

Put all your ice in one bucket

No more filling the bathtub with ice to chill your bottles. From serving bubbly to holding a modern flower arrangement, this one does it all. Kate Spade New York's Two of a Kind ice bucket, $89, TheBay.com.

Always a glass act

Class things up a bit: It's glass over plastic — always! Champagne glasses, $2, Dollarama.ca.

Tray magnifique

It's a satellite serving bar, handy side table or sparkly multi-candle display pedestal. Giles Tray Table, $229, UrbanBarn.com.

ALL PHOTOS: CONTRIBUTED

Balsam bouquet

Create the smell of an enchanted forest with the evergreen scent of Fraser fir, crushed balsam needles, spruce, cedar and holly. Royal Forest Candle, $24, Crabtree-Evelyn.ca.

Adapt a wall-mounted coat rack to hold pots and pans instead. ISTOCK

Make room: Rack up those pots and pans

DIY. Recycle common household items to create racks that free up kitchen space for holiday feast-making

'Tis the season to gather friends and family around the kitchen table to enjoy good company and yummy food.

With all the cooking and baking that accompanies the holiday season, some extra storage room is always valuable. Hanging pots and pans is a crafty way to create much needed space and keep them accessible.

Read on for ideas on how to create a rack to hang cookware using recycled materials around the home.

Lift it

Suspend an old window frame above a counter top or kitchen island to hang up cookware.

Before getting started, it's important to select an area and access the ceiling joists to determine how much weight the frame can support. This is a crucial step before hanging anything from the ceiling.

Measure the distance between the ceiling and the floor to make sure the pots are at arm's length, but not too low.

Don't have access to a window frame? Try using an old bicycle wheel or a coffee table frame.

Hang it

Use a wall mounted coat rack. If the wood and hooks are being recycled, add a personal touch to them.

Sand the wood plank for a cleaner look or paint it a different colour to match the rest of the kitchen.

Spray-painting the hooks is another option. If necessary, proceed to screw the hooks onto the plank.

More kitchen renos

Get inspired by even more kitchen renovations with all new back-to-back episodes of Kitchen Crashers, on Wednesdays at 10 p.m. ET/PT on DIY Network Canada.

Consider the number of pots and pans you want to hang up and make sure you have enough materials and that the hooks are spaced out accordingly. Select the desired area and install.

Lean it

Use an old ladder and lean it against the cupboards or any other convenient area. A ladder that has rounded and skinny rungs is ideal for this type of project. Garage sales or flea markets are a great place to find various sizes and colours.

Next, measure and note the rungs' circumference. Based on these measurements and the number of pots to hang, purchase steel s-hooks. Place the hooks on the ladder's rungs and hang the cookware.

Get the hang of it

Hanging pots and pans is a crafty way to create much-needed space and keep them accessible.

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Habitat for Humanity

Raising funds for low-income GTA families

BRYAN TUCKEY
President and CEO of the Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD) can be found at twitter.com/bildgta, facebook.com/bildgta, and bildblogs.ca.

BILD has been a community partner with Habitat for Humanity GTA since 2003. The association has raised more than $750,000 and helped 11 families realize their dreams of home ownership. Our most recent fundraiser was the Party for Humanity, with more than 400 BILD members attending in support of Habitat, as well as to celebrate the leadership of BILD chair Steve Upton whose tenure will expire at the end of this year. Steve's wisdom and dedication to the industry has paved the way to a healthy working relationship with our partners across all levels of government — a key component of our industry's ability to building quality, complete communities across our region. Steve's association accomplishments include his appointment to Mayor-elect John Tory's Transition Advisory Council and his hard work to amend the building code to allow the construction of wood-frame buildings up to six storeys in Ontario. I would like to thank Steve for his commitment to our association and the industry, and congratulate him on a successful fundraiser that helped raise thousands of dollars for our partner family.

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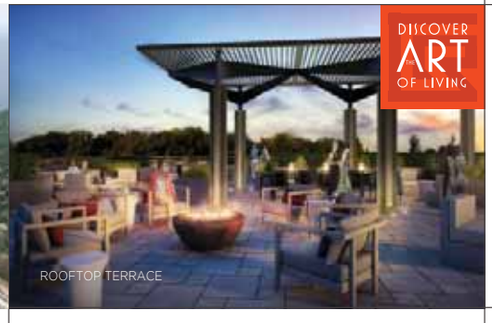

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All lined up on Niagara

90 Niagara combines condo suites and townhomes. CONTRIBUTED

Meet the condo

- **What.** 90 Niagara
- **Builder.** Fieldgate Homes
- **Architect.** Giannone Petricone Associates Inc.
- **Designer.** Bryon Patton and Associates
- **Location.** 90 Niagara St., near Wellington and Bathurst
- **Building.** Five storeys with 45 condo suites and townhomes
- **Sizes.** From 599 to 1,030 sq. ft.
- **Pricing.** From the mid-$300,000s
- **Status.** Pre-construction, registration phase
- **Website.** 90niagara.com

The project overview

90 Niagara is an intimate mid-rise address that embraces the modern spirit and style of its Downtown West neighbourhood. With its striking horizontal lines, the design seamlessly unites the project's two forms of housing in a distinctive architectural fusion.

Location and transit

Situated just west of Toronto's downtown core, 90 Niagara is conveniently located near the Bathurst TTC bus routes and the King streetcar. A quick jaunt to Lake Shore Boulevard and the Gardiner Expressway gets drivers to all points east and west.

Building amenities

90 Niagara features an elegant boutique lobby with mail room, a party room with bar, seating area and electric fireplace. There's also a landscaped outdoor terrace with barbecue and seating areas. Suites feature balconies with aluminum glass railings, glass main entry doors, nine-foot ceilings and hardwood flooring.

In the neighbourhood

Residents will enjoy Toronto's finest selection of restaurants, pubs and clubs, all within walking distance along King Street West. Nearby is Stanley Park and Victoria Memorial Park as well as the Fort York historic grounds.

What's hot on the condo market

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2. Don Mills

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3. Roncesvalles

Sales Event: Howard Park 2 luxury condo residences in Roncesvalles Village is now offering up to $10,000 cash back and a year of free movies. Visit the sales office and model suite at 60 Howard Park Ave.

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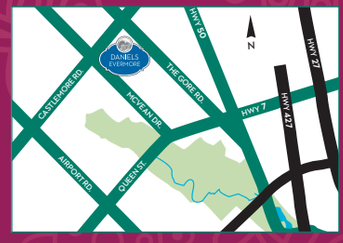

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Create fresh holiday looks with ikebana

Decor. The asymmetry of Japanese flower arranging offers a modern approach to traditional decoration

Holiday decorations in the U.S. are often symmetrical: Two candles on either side of the mantle, a round wreath in the centre of the door, a centrepiece with matching sprigs of holly and pine on each side.

The ancient Japanese art of ikebana, or flower arranging, can provide festive sparkle and colour, too, with a much more modern feel.

Three basic tenets

"The three basic tenets are line, movement and open space," said Eileen Kay, a retired elementary-school teacher in Boulder, Colo., who has been studying ikebana for years.

"Most people go to the store and buy a bunch of flowers. But there's no line. The line could be a piece of ivy, a ribbon, anything that lends itself to visual flow."

Mastering ikebana requires years of training, and there are many methods of approaching the art. The Sogetsu school of flower arranging, one of the largest and most accessible, teaches that anyone can arrange ikebana and with almost anything.

Even for the uninitiated, a few basic tools and principles are sufficient to begin experimenting at home with this different esthetic — just in time for holiday decor.

"The biggest difference between Western arrangements and ikebana is asymmetry," said Kimi Quinn, a Sogetsu-certified practitioner who has been designing ikebana arrangements in the U.S. and Japan for over 20 years. "Ikebana is about capturing the universe and nature. Nothing in the natural world is symmetrical."

Zen quality

In ikebana, the empty space between branches is as important as the branches themselves.

"It's like that Zen question asking about the sound of one hand clapping. The answer is silence. Space," Quinn said.

Many ikebana arrangements mix and match tall tree branches and much smaller flowers with no perfectly vertical or horizontal lines, plenty of space in between and, if a low dish is used, the water often in view.

To begin, all that's needed is a heavy pin board (kenzan) or a block of flower-arranging sponge, available at craft and floral-supply stores, and a low salad bowl or platter. The container should be filled with just enough water to barely cover the pin board or sponge.

You might start with a decorative branch for a long defining line, a medium flower or branch and a shorter flower, and a large leaf or some other small flower to help cover the pin board.

For the holidays, bare branches painted silver, gold or white are a good choice, as are pine, holly or even red roses.

Curves and lines

In general, "the longest stem should be twice as long as the container is wide," Quinn said. "The medium stem should be around three-quarters the length of the longer branch, and the shorter stem should be around half the length of the medium stem."

Before arranging the stems and branches, trim excess foliage, and trim the stems while they are submerged in water. They should be clipped at an angle for tree branches and straight across for flower stems, Quinn said.

"You don't just stick them straight down into the pin board," she said. "You angle them in different directions, some backward and others forward, to give some depth and perspective. Pay attention to the curve of the lines, and the spaces between the lines."

Think about the beauty of the natural forms, and allow your personality and feeling to come through, Quinn said.

Ikebana displays typically last only three to five days.

"It's so sad when they go because I've put so much heart into them," Quinn said. "But appreciating that fleeting beauty is really the essence of what it's all about."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"Ikebana is about capturing the universe and nature. Nothing in the natural world is symmetrical."

Kimi Quinn, a Sogetsu-certified practitioner

A freestyle ikebana arrangement with red amaryllis and kiwi branches. KEITH STANLEY/KEITHSTANLEY.COM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A holiday arrangement featuring cedar, freesia and hypericum. IKEBANA DREAMING/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

'Good old boys'

Cherry recalls Quinn as an old-school coach

Don Cherry remembers Pat Quinn as an old-school coach with a special way about him.

Quinn, a former NHL defenceman, coach and executive, died Sunday night in Vancouver after a lengthy illness. He was 71.

"He was one of the good old boys. We're all going fast," the 80-year-old Cherry told The Canadian Press.

Cherry added Quinn "had the touch" with his players.

"The players loved him," Cherry said.

"All the old-school coaches, the players loved them. Because they were one of them, more or less."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

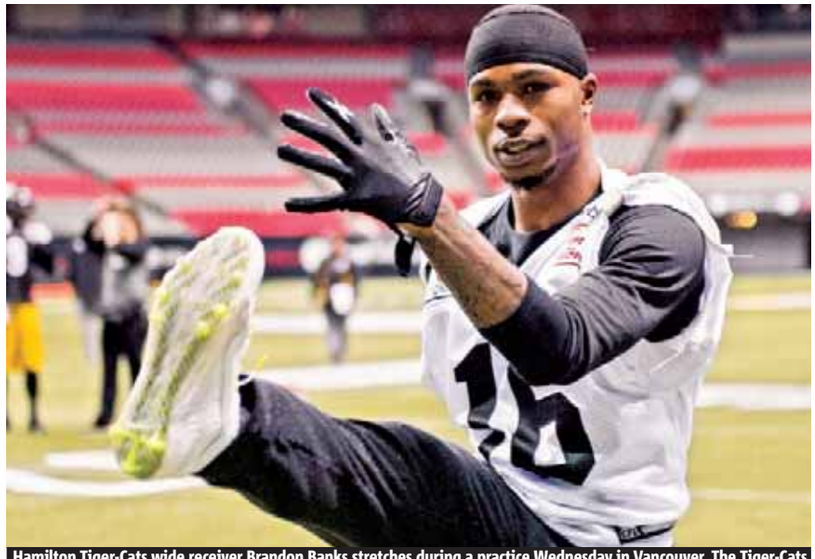
On the web

Go to metronews.ca for coverage of Wednesday night's Raptors game in Atlanta and the Maple Leafs' game in Pittsburgh.

Toronto Raptors guard Kyle Lowry defends against the Hawks in Atlanta on Wednesday. TODD KIRKLAND/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tiny Banks makes his way amid giants

At 153 pounds. After five punt returns and a playoff-record 226 yards, pint-sized Ticat gets noticed big-time



Hamilton Tiger-Cats wide receiver Brandon Banks stretches during a practice Wednesday in Vancouver. The Tiger-Cats face the Calgary Stampeders on Sunday in the 102nd CFL Grey Cup. PAUL CHIASSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

At six-foot-five and 325 pounds, Peter Dyakowski fits in nicely when it comes to the super-sized world of pro football.

A Caterpillar would have a hard time moving the Hamilton Tiger-Cats offensive lineman.

But the big man couldn't help but be envious of pint-sized teammate Brandon Banks on the trip out to the Grey Cup.

"I like being a big guy, but we were flying out on the plane (Tuesday), we were eating our dinner and all the O-linemen were like this," said Dyakowski, mimicking eating in a scrunched-up position.

"And Brandon's sitting back, enjoying a nice relaxed dinner in this giant chair that he gets to sit in, with all the space in the world. I guess sometimes he's got a leg up on us."

Banks is listed at five-foot-seven and 153 pounds. But pressed by reporters, the kick returner-receiver known as Speedy or Speedy-B admits to some poetic licence.

"I've always been the smallest guy and I honestly probably weigh 149 pounds," he said after practice Wednesday at BC Place Stadium.

"I just feel any time I touch the ball, I have the possibility of going the distance," he said.

He did that twice on electric punt returns last weekend — three times if you count a 78-yard runback for a score that was called back due to a penalty — in Hamilton's 40-24 Eastern final win over Montreal.

Banks had five punt returns for a playoff-record 226 yards. His two TD returns — which covered 93 and 88 yards — also tied a playoff mark. The North Carolina native had three carries for 35 yards and four catches for 33 yards to finish with 294 total yards.

His second TD return was a marvel as he left Als players twisting in the wind.

"It was almost like Casper the Ghost because it looks like we were just grasping for air and he wasn't there," said Montreal coach Tom Higgins.

With kickers penalized for punting the ball out of bounds other than within the 20-yard line, it is hard to escape Banks.

Is his size an advantage, he was asked?

"It has its pros and cons," he said. "Because when I get hit, it don't feel good.

"But it does have a little bit of advantage. I've got a little bit of wiggle with me to get away from bigger guys."

One opponent he relishes seeing in his sights is the kicker — usually the last man to beat, a pylon in opposition colours.

"That's the best thing. That's like Christmas morning for me," he said with a laugh.

Banks, 26, spent three years as a returner for the Washington Redskins but came north last year after the NFL team did not tender the restricted free agent an offer.

"I don't think I got a fair shake," he said of his time in the NFL. "I don't think I got an opportunity to show my wide receiver skills."

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Ticats slotback Luke Tasker

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Downhill skiing

Osborne-Paradis second in training

Canada's Manny Osborne-Paradis pushed the pace in the first World Cup downhill training run of the season. Norway's Kjetil Jansrud posted the fastest time, 1.54.21 at Lake Louise with the Osborne-Paradis right behind him with a time of 1:54.54.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL

New lease on life for legend Brodeur

The St. Louis Blues are giving Martin Brodeur, 42, a chance to return to the NHL. The Blues are in need of goaltending help after starter Brian Elliott sustained a lower-body injury last night in a game against the Ottawa Senators. Brodeur is the NHL's all-time leader in wins (688) and shutouts (124). THE CANADIAN PRESS

Martin Brodeur will begin training with St. Louis on Friday GETTY IMAGES

MLB

Cuban Tomas set for Arizona deal

Cuban outfielder Yasmany Tomas is in the process of agreeing to a $68.5 million US, six-year contract with the Arizona Diamondbacks, according to a person familiar with the negotiations. Tomas, 24, hit .375 (6 for 16) for Cuba in last year's World Baseball Classic.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Basketball

Violation earns Japan suspension

The governing body of basketball suspended the Japan Basketball Association on Wednesday, a decision that will prevent the country from taking part in the Olympics. The suspension results from the JBA's failure to merge two of its leagues which is in violation of its general statutes.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Carabins QB calm ahead of Vanier Cup

Gabriel Cousineau. Despite the Marauders having the advantage of experience the Montreal outfit aren't 'feeling more pressure'

Playing in their home city will be a boost to the University of Montreal Carabins, but experience will be on the McMaster Marauders' side in the Vanier Cup game.

More than 20,000 tickets had been sold by the time the teams' coaches and a few players from each side gathered for a news conference on Wednesday ahead of the Canadian Inter-university Sport championship football game.

A sellout of 23,500, most of them wearing Carabins blue and white, is expected for Saturday afternoon's game at Percival Molson Stadium, the Montreal Alouettes' home field on the McGill University campus downtown.

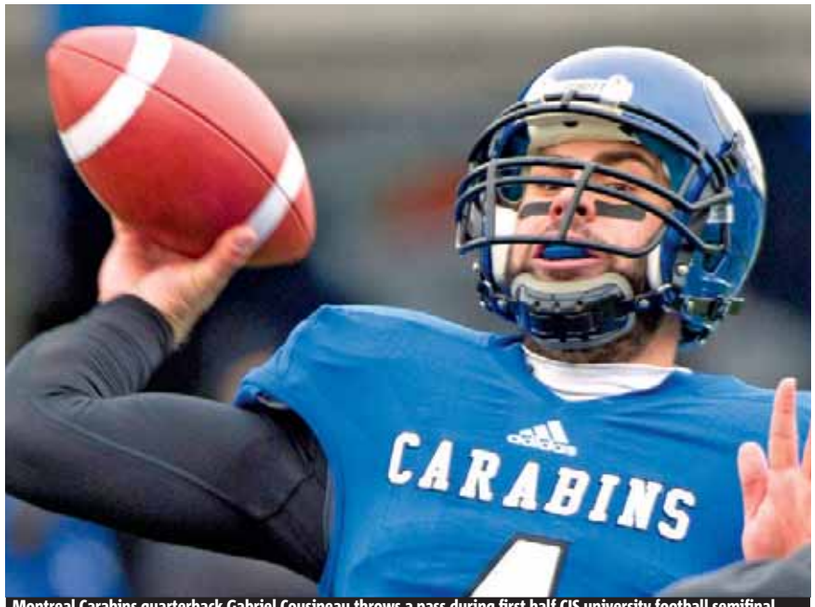
"We're playing on a bigger stage, for sure, but we're not feeling any more pressure," said Carabins quarterback Gabriel Cousineau, whose team downed the Manitoba Bisons in the Uteck Bowl at their 5,100-seat CEPSUM Stadium last Saturday. "It's an opportunity to play in our city in front of our fans and we hope we'll give them a good show."

The Carabins are in their first Vanier Cup after finally downing the powerhouse Laval Rouge et Or, who had won 11 straight conference titles. The Marauders will be in their third Vanier Cup in four years. They beat Laval in 2011 in Vancouver and lost to the Rouge et Or in 2012 in Toronto. Now they are headed onto their opponent's turf to try for a second title.

"We're excited to be on the national stage and play our best football in front of what know will be an exciting environment and a very blue crowd," said Marauders quarterback Marshall Ferguson, who will be playing his last CIS game.

"Playing far away from home, it should make a difference, but once the ball's kicked off, aside from the noise, it's all just football. We need to look at the micro and not the macro. Make sure we eliminate errors, turnovers and things like that because that's what wins football games." Coach Stefan Ptaszek said Vanier Cup experience will come in handy. There are 12 players left from their last trips to the final, and the victory in 2011 was perhaps their biggest moment.

"We were naive," said Ptaszek. "We hadn't been to the game in 44 years and that ignorance was bliss. We just let it all hang out and played. Now, being more educated on how good the (Quebec conference) can be, that knowledge isn't a bad thing. This team doesn't sneak up on us. We're very aware of what we're getting into." THE CANADIAN PRESS



Montreal Carabins quarterback Gabriel Cousineau throws a pass during first half CIS university football semifinal action against the Manitoba Bisons in Montreal on Saturday. GRAHAM HUGHES/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mario superb in Madrid's red and white

metro AR Atletico Madrid's Mario Mandzukic's celebrates his third goal to cap a 4-0 win Champions League over Olympiakos on Wednesday in Madrid. Scan the image with your Metro News app for a roundup of Wednesday's action from around Europe. DENIS DOYLE/GETTY IMAGES

Mario Mandzukic capitalized on woeful defending to score a hat trick and steer Atletico Madrid into the knockout stages of the Champions League with a 4-0 win over Olympiakos on Wednesday.

Atletico attacked the Greek champions from the start, coming close with a Raul Garcia header in the second minute, and the 2014 losing finalists continued to pile on the pressure throughout the match.

Garcia opened the scoring when he tapped in Juanfran Torres's cross in the ninth minute after Olympiakos goalkeeper Roberto cleared straight to the Atletico defender.

Mandzukic struck first after a misunderstanding between defenders Alberto Botia and Eric Abidal enabled him to score from Cristian Ansaldi's pass in the 38th minute.

Mandzukic turned to head in a cross from Arda Turan in the 62nd minute and then headed his third in the 65th.

With Juventus beating Malmo 2-0 in the other Group A match, Atletico is top with 12 points, followed by Juventus on nine. Olympiakos is on six points and Malmo has three.

Atletico avenged an opening 3-2 defeat by Olympiakos in Greece and now only needs a draw against Juventus in its final match to be sure of qualifying as the group winner.

"We now have to face a very tough match against a great rival, but with the intention of going there and winning," said Garcia, who looked to be offside when he scored.

Antoine Griezmann looked to have scored a fifth for Atletico in the 88th, but the referee judged there had been a dangerous kick in the penalty area and disallowed his effort.

"We didn't play well," Olympiakos coach Michel Gonzalez said. "I'm unhappy about the feeling we gave out there, of never having been into the match."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Serious Fraud Office

World Cup bids to be investigated

A criminal investigation into allegations of World Cup bidding corruption could be opened in Britain, with authorities urging whistleblowers to come forward with information.

The Serious Fraud Office is pursuing "every reasonable line of inquiry, including working closely with appropriate overseas authorities," the government department said according to a letter sent to a British legislator.

The Swiss attorney general has already received a criminal complaint from FIFA against possible lawbreaking in the investigation into World Cup bidding. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
No matter how many times you may have doubted your instincts in the past, don't doubt them today. According to the planets, you are in tune with the spirit of the times!

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Is what you are doing with your life meaningful? There may be moments today when your confidence wavers. Try to understand that whatever path you're on is the right one.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Act on what your instincts are telling you. It does not matter if everyone else seems to be moving in the opposite direction, it matters only that you trust your inner voice.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Make a wish today. You may not get what you want immediately but the planets indicate that by the start of next week you will see a major change.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
The mental boundaries you set up are far too rigid and need to be broken down. Think the unthinkable today. You may be surprised what you learn.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Even if you're happy with the way life is going it will pay to try something different. A new routine may seem odd to begin but you will eventually wonder why you didn't change sooner.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
What happens over the next 24 hours will confirm that it is a mistake to limit yourself in any way. Old ways of doing things are unlikely to make your world better — but new methods will.

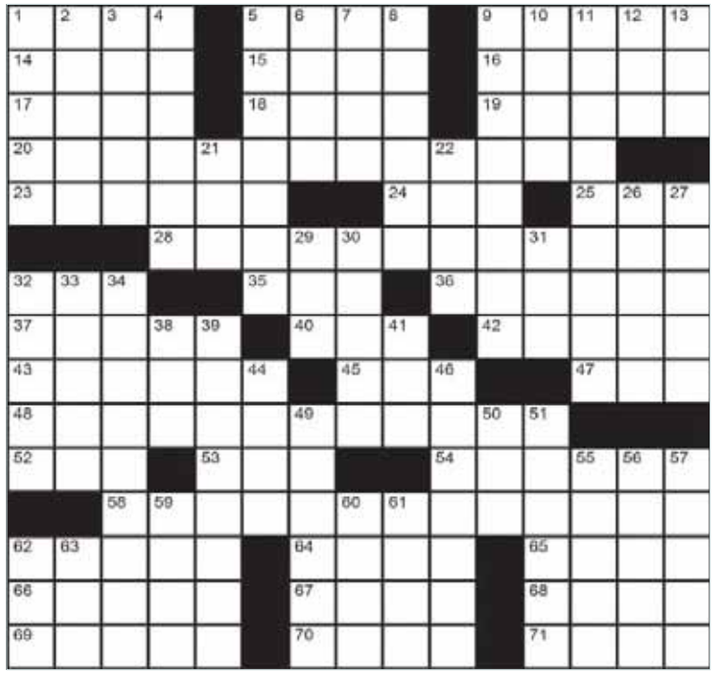
♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
The obvious solution to a problem is not necessarily the right one and today's cosmic outlook urges you to try something that has not been done before.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
If you've been feeling left out of things, don't worry. What happens over the next few days will clue you in to what's going on and give you a starring role.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
A work issue may be giving you problems but if you stay calm and listen to your inner voice it will guide you to the solution.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Someone is determined to make your life difficult but you won't overcome them by direct confrontation. Find ways you can influence their behaviour in more subtle ways.

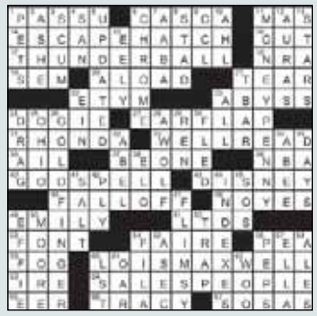
Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan



Across
1. __ water
5. Pool-playing props
9. __ Thanksgiving Day Parade
14. Dial
15. Spoken
16. Basset __ (Instruments)
17. Peru neighbour, briefly
18. Attention
19. Where Joan of Arc was executed in 1431
20. Unwanted caller, often: 2 wds.
23. Lustrous sheets fabric
24. Ms. Harper, to pals
25. QVC equivalent in Canada
28. Master ensuite feature: 2 wds.
32. Culture/natural history attraction in Toronto [acronym]
35. Ms. Carrere
36. __ door
37. Belonging to Edith's li'l hubby
40. Edmonton transport service [acronym]
42. Ran, like the tortoise's competitor, say
43. Johnny Cash: "__ Prison Blues"
45. Revolutionary leader, __ Guevara
47. __ Lanka
48. La __ (World language organization that Canada, New Brunswick and Quebec are a part of)
52. Games org.
53. River inlet
54. Some curtains fabrics
58. Satisfyingly happy sounding Newfoundland town: 2 wds.
62. Grassland of South Africa
64. Math course, briefly
65. Bee's place
66. Barry Manilow's "_ __ It Through the Rain"
67. Shakespeare: "__ __, Brute?" - Caesar
68. Dr. __ Spengler, "Ghostbusters" (1984) role
69. Taboos
70. Actress Martha
71. Jean __, Wide Sargasso Sea author

Down
1. Timetables, slangly-spelled
2. __ _ week (Every seven days)
3. Have misgivings
4. Slacked
5. Type of oil or milk
6. Russian river
7. 'Grey' tea
8. Cookies bag row
9. Village known for its Saskatoonberry Festival each summer
10. Peek-_-__!
11. Royalty attendants
12. "__-haw!"
13. Amer. ID
21. Prez
22. Cleveland basketballers, briefly
26. Turn
27. Ms. Lauper
29. Cartoonist Mr. Keane
30. Tamarack __, Northwest Territories' official tree
31. Firearms org.
32. "Baby Beluga" Canadian troubadour
33. __ Munroe/Storm (Marvel Comics heroine)
34. Canadian songstress Sarah
38. QVC rival in The States
39. Plato's teacher
41. Even if, briefly
44. "Cold" by Canadian singer Rob __
46. "Free Your Mind" singing group: 2 wds.
49. Pitter-__
50. Lithium-__ battery
51. __/Or
55. Actress, Jennifer Jason __
56. Delegate
57. British WWII submachine guns
59. Taro root
60. Title for a Miss, in Spanish [abbr.]
61. Quebec __
62. Mr. Diesel
63. Comedian Mr. Philips

Yesterday's Crossword

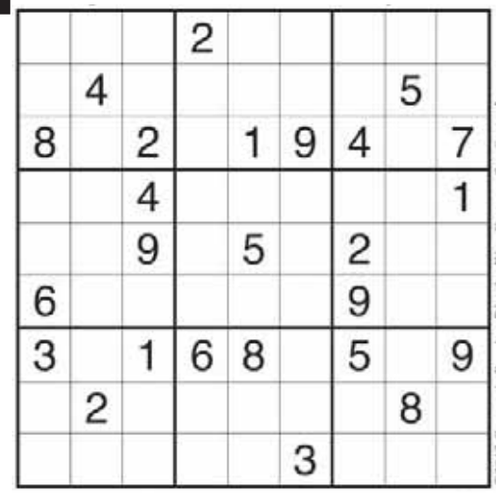


Online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.



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Yesterday's Sudoku

9	1	6	5	3	8	7	2	4
7	2	5	9	4	1	8	6	3
4	3	8	6	7	2	9	5	1
3	9	2	8	5	7	1	4	6
5	8	4	1	2	6	3	9	7
1	6	7	3	9	4	2	8	5
8	4	9	7	1	5	6	3	2
6	5	1	2	8	3	4	7	9
2	7	3	4	6	9	5	1	8

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®The Hyundai names, logos, product names, feature names, images and slogans are trademarks owned by Hyundai Auto Canada Corp. ‡Cash price of $11,995/$23,995 available on all new in stock Black Noir Pearl 2015 Elantra L 6-speed Manual/Twilight Black Santa Fe Sport 2.4L FWD models. Prices include Delivery and Destination charges of $1,595/$1,795, fees, levies and all applicable charges (excluding HST) price adjustments of $4,635/$3,835, and Black Friday price adjustments of $1,000/$1,000. Prices exclude registration, insurance, PPSA, license fees and dealer admin. fees of up to $499. Fees may vary by dealer. Delivery and Destination charge includes freight, P.D.E. and a full tank of gas. †Finance offers available O.A.C. from Hyundai Financial Services based on a 2015 Sonata GL Auto with an annual finance rate of 0% for 96 months. Weekly payments are $59. $0 down payment required. Cost of Borrowing is $0. Finance offers include Delivery and Destination of $1,695, levies and all applicable charges (excluding HST). Finance offers exclude registration, insurance, PPSA, license fees and dealer admin. fees of up to $499. Fees may vary by dealer. Financing example: 2015 Black Noir Pearl Sonata GL Auto for $25,080 at 0% per annum equals $59 weekly for 96 months for a total obligation of $25,080. $0 down payment required. Cost of Borrowing is $0. Finance example excludes registration, insurance, PPSA, license fees and dealer admin. fees of up to $499. Fees may vary by dealer. ΩPrice adjustments are calculated against the vehicle's starting price. Price adjustments of up to $4,635/$3,835 available on in stock 2015 Elantra L 6-speed manual/2015 Santa Fe Sport 2.4L FWD. Price adjustments applied before taxes. Offer cannot be combined or used in conjunction with any other available offers. Offer is non-transferable and cannot be assigned. No vehicle trade-in required. ▽$1,000 Black Friday price adjustments are on 2015 Black Noir Pearl/Space Black Elantra, 2015 Black Noir Pearl Sonata, and 2015 Twilight Black Santa Fe Sport. Offer valid from November 27th to December 1st, 2014, inclusive. See dealer for details. ♦Prices of models shown: 2015 Elantra Limited/2015 Santa Fe Sport 2.0T Limited AWD/2015 Sonata Limited are $27,380/$41,580/$32,830. Prices include Delivery and Destination charges of $1,595/$1,795/$1,595/$1,695, levies and all applicable charges (excluding HST). Prices exclude registration, insurance, PPSA, license fees and dealer admin. fees of up to $499. Fees may vary by dealer. ▽‡†♦ΩOffers available for a limited time and subject to change or cancellation without notice. Dealer may sell for less. Inventory is limited, dealer order may be required. Visit www.hyundaicanada.com or see dealer for complete details. ††Hyundai's Comprehensive Limited Warranty coverage covers most vehicle components against defects in workmanship under normal use and maintenance conditions.